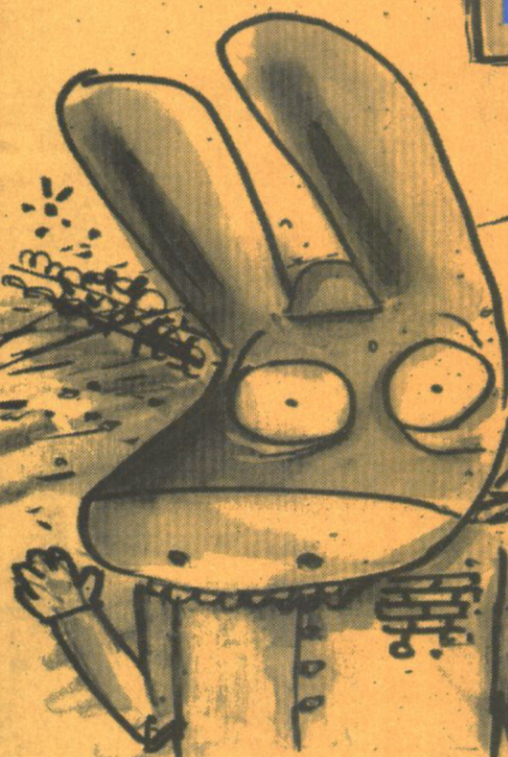


WILL CONGRESS GIVE AWAY THE NEW TV SPECTRUM?

July 22-August 4, 1996

IN THESE TIMES

In the Trenches with the



\$2.50/CANADA \$3.00



James Weinstein reports

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

E D I T O R I A L

BRIGGS & STRATTON TRIES TO SILENCE ITS CRITICS

The *National Catholic Reporter* (NCR), the best weekly newspaper published in the United States, is being sued for \$30 million by the Milwaukee-based Briggs & Stratton Corp., a manufacturer of small engines, for having the temerity to condemn the “wrenching human consequences” of the company’s “decision to cut workers and move operations” to Mexico “to increase profits.” Briggs & Stratton, which made a profit of \$70 million in 1992, demanded and got substantial concessions in wages, added health insurance costs and losses of \$1,200 per worker in annual profit-sharing. Then, continuing to cut its workforce—from some 10,700 to fewer than 5,500—the company saw its profits soar to \$102 million while its stock prices multiplied fourfold.

NCR compared Briggs & Stratton to the Harley-Davidson Co, also based in Milwaukee, which after 91 years in the city pledges its continued commitment to the community. “Our company,” a spokesman told NCR, “is built on respect for certain values ... values like respect for the individual and being fair.” Harley-Davidson, which employs 4,000 people in the Milwaukee area, has no plans to move operations outside the United States, he said.

Tom Fox, NCR’s editor, was especially concerned that among the decision-makers at Briggs & Stratton—“among those seemingly blind to the consequences of their choices—are Catholics educated in Catholic institutions.”

Acknowledging that it is often difficult to integrate “moral vision into our lives” when economic decision-making is involved, Fox suggested that it would be useful to look at the U.S. bishops’ 1986 pastoral letter, “Economic Justice for All.” This pastoral letter, written under the guidance of Milwaukee Archbishop Rembert Weakland, suggested six moral principles as a guide to economic decisions. As reviewed by Fox, they are:

- Every economic decision and institution must be judged

in light of whether it protects or undermines the dignity of the human person.

- Human dignity can be realized and protected only in community.

- All people have a right to participate in the economic life of society.

- All members of society have a special obligation to the poor and the vulnerable.

- Human rights are the minimum conditions for life in community.

- Society as a whole, acting through public and private institutions, has the moral responsibility to enhance human dignity and protect human rights.

Briggs & Stratton officers, including company president John Shiely, a Catholic and graduate of a Catholic high school as well as Notre Dame University and Marquette University Law School, were outraged at this

alleged invasion of their privacy. But as company officers, these men are clearly public figures and as such are not entitled to the same degree of privacy as other citizens.

In any case, after refusing to be interviewed by NCR, even though NCR offered to travel to Milwaukee to get their side of the story, the plaintiffs then demanded that the newspaper publish a 3,000-word unedited letter laying out their version of reality. That letter, according to Fox, went way beyond the substance of the article. So NCR refused to print it, but did offer to run a shorter version that stuck to relevant material.

We agree with Fox that this lawsuit by Briggs & Stratton is clearly an attempt to muzzle critics and intimidate one of the few independent voices in the media principled and courageous enough to take on such powerful corporate entities.

And we share with the bishops who wrote the 1986 pastoral letter the belief that it is necessary to find ways to impose our shared social values on the economy. That can only be done by an aroused public, Catholic and non-Catholic alike. Corporations should be held responsible for their anti-social acts. They should not be allowed to use the courts simply as a means of silencing those concerned with the protection of our most basic social rights. ◀

WELCOME, DEIDRE MCFADYEN

With this issue we welcome Deidre McFadyen as our new managing editor, and bid a fond farewell to Chris Lehmann, who has gone off to greener pastures at Long Island *Newsday*.

Deidre comes to us from *NACLA Report on the Americas*, where she worked for five years, first as associate editor and then as editor. Before that she worked as an assistant editor at *Harper's* magazine.

IN THESE TIMES

"...with liberty and justice for all"

Editor: James Weinstein
Managing Editor: Deidre McFadyen
Senior Editors: Joel Bleifuss, David Moberg, Salim Muwakkil, Patricia Aufderheide (on leave)
Asst. Managing Editor: Dave Mulcahey
New York Editor: Daniel Lazare
Europe Editor: Diana Johnstone
Eastern Europe Correspondent: Paul Hockenros
Russia Correspondent: Fred Weir
Far East Correspondent: Dave Lindorff
Education Editor: Alex Molnar
Contributing Editors: Bill Boisvert, David Futrelle, Miles Harvey, Peter Karman, Chris Lehmann, Jim McNeill, Ilan Stavans
Media Watch Columnist: Thomas Goetz
Film Critics: Linda DeLibero, Pat Dowell
Copy Editor: George Hodak
Typo: Jim Rinnert
Editorial Interns: Sarah Hayford, Beth Johnson, Birsan Kahraman, Brian Mier, Sandy Zipp
ITT Radio Coordinator: Miles Harvey

Art Director: Peter Hannan
Associate Art Director: Kit Boyce
Cartoonist: Terry LaBan

Publisher: James Weinstein
Associate Publisher: Beth Schulman
Assistant Publisher: Claudia Morris

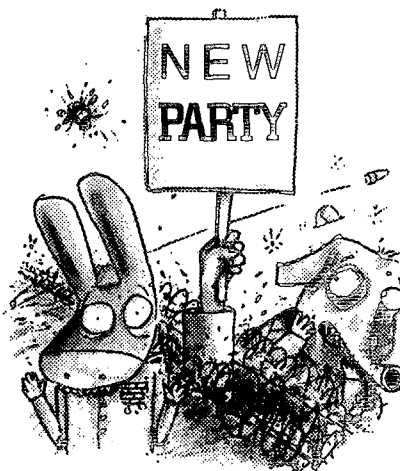
Business Manager: Robert Larson
Circulation Director: Jake Blankenship
Advertising Director: Patricia Gray

In These Times (ISSN 0160-5992) is published biweekly by the Institute for Public Affairs, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647. Subscriptions are \$36.95 a year (\$59 for institutions; \$61.95 Canada; \$75.95 overseas). Second-class postage paid at Chicago, IL and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *In These Times*, 308 E. Hitt St., Mt. Morris, IL 61054. This issue (Vol. 20, No. 18) published July 22, 1996 for newsstand sales July 22-August 4, 1996. (312) 772-0100. Member: Alternative Press Syndicate. The entire contents of *In These Times* are copyright © 1996 by the Institute for Public Affairs, and may not be reproduced in any manner, either in whole or in part, without permission of the publisher. Copies of *In These Times* contract with the National Writers Union are available upon request. Complete issues and volumes of *In These Times* are available from University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, MI. All rights reserved. *In These Times* is indexed in both the Alternative Press Index and the Left Index. Publisher does not assume liability for unsolicited manuscripts or material. Manuscripts or material unaccompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelope will not be returned. All correspondence should be sent to: *In These Times*, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647. E-mail: itt@igc.apc.org. For customer service and to place subscription orders, call toll free: (800) 827-0270. Advertising rates sent on request. Available back issues are \$5 each; specify volume and number. All letters received by *In These Times* become property of the newspaper. We reserve the right to print letters in condensed form.



Volume 20, Number 18

COVER © 1996 PETER HANNAN



In the trenches

The New Party articulates an urban-based and locally oriented left politics
JAMES WEINSTEIN

14

Giveaway of the century

Broadcasters are making a silent grab for the new spectrum on the public airwaves

SAM HUSSEINI

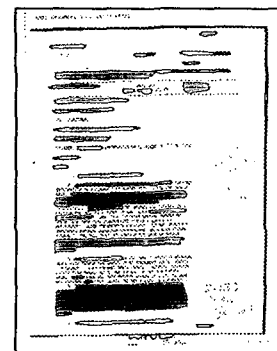
18

Admissions and omissions

Declassified CIA documents shed light on shady activities in Guatemala

LISA HAUGAARD

21



FEATURES

| | |
|--|----|
| The First Stone: Fish and fishermen imperiled • Joel Bleifuss..... | 12 |
| The hip-hop wars • Salim Muwakkil..... | 24 |
| Workers for rent • Chris Cook..... | 26 |
| Policing the global workplace • David Moberg..... | 29 |

REVIEWS

| | |
|---|----|
| Film: <i>Lone Star</i> • Pat Dowell..... | 32 |
| In Print: <i>The Trouble With Blame</i> • David Futrelle..... | 34 |

DEPARTMENTS

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|----|
| Letters..... | 4 | Media Watch • Thomas Goetz..... | 9 |
| Sylvia • Nicole Hollander..... | 4 | Tomorrow's news • Steve Brodner..... | 9 |
| In Short..... | 6 | Huge Mouth • Peter Hannan..... | 11 |
| Appall-O-Meter • David Futrelle..... | 7 | Classifieds..... | 37 |

LETTERS

The no-peace process

I am a great admirer of Benny Morris' historical work, but his analysis of current events leaves much to be desired. His recent commentary on the Israeli elections ("A hawk's progress," June 24) reads like a piece in *Newsweek*. He characterizes Peres as the great hope for peace, and paints a bleak picture for the "peace process" now that Netanyahu is running the show. He even throws in a reference to the Iranian bogeyman as one of the primary causes of the current disaster.

Well, the record shows that the "peace process" has been in serious trouble ever since the handshake on the White House lawn. Over the past three years the Rabin-Peres government has expanded settlements; confiscated land; built Jewish-only roads to connect settlements; demolished homes; continued to hold prisoners; pushed the Palestinians into two agree-

ments that basically gave away any possibility of their exercising sovereignty; and encouraged the Palestinian Authority in its policy of gross violations of human rights. This is the "peace" whose status we're supposed to fret over?

As for the alleged Iranian responsibility for Hamas and Hezbollah attacks, it is well known that it was Peres' decision to violate an informal truce with Hamas and assassinate Yehyah Ayash that directly led to the rash of suicide bombings in the spring. Similarly, it was Peres' shelling of civilians in southern Lebanon, in violation of the agreement with Hezbollah, that led to the rocket attacks on northern Israel.

There is much obfuscation of what is really going on in the Middle East and progressives look to journals like *In These Times* for straight talk. Unfortunately, they didn't get it this time.

Joe Levine
Raleigh, N.C.

False report

Someone has misinformed *In These Times* about what's going on in the New Mexico Green Party (see "In Short," June 24). First, U.S. Senate candidate Sam Hitt was not hung in effigy by "Indian villagers," but rather by militant loggers backed by the "wise use" movement and multinational timber and mining companies. These forces have targeted Sam because he is an effective environmental leader who threatens corporate power and special interests. One of their tactics has been to portray Sam as an "environmental extremist" who threatens Latino culture and jobs. Although nothing could be further from the truth, this kind of rhetoric has been repeated by certain Green Party leaders and candidates.

I do not believe this scapegoating of environmentalists is supported by rank-and-file Green Party members. I ran for State Land Commissioner on the Green ticket in 1994 as a strong defender of the environment and received 12 percent of the vote, compared to 10 percent received by gubernatorial candidate Roberto Mondragón—despite the fact that he spent 25 times more money than I did. Credit Abraham Gutmann's victory to aggressive campaigning or to low voter turnout (less than a third of registered Greens voted in the June primary) but not to any broad-based renunciation of environmentalism.

SYLVIA

by Nicole Hollander



In fact, there are two strong environmentalists running on the Green Party ticket for the state legislature this year. They are Mary Lou Jones, PO Box 39, San Rafael, NM 87051, and Bob Anderson, 115 Columbia SE, Apt. 32, Albuquerque, NM 87106. They deserve recognition and support.

Patricia Wolff
Santa Fe, N.M.

Money murmurs

Joel Bleifuss is my kind of writer. I love his ass-kicking rabble-rousing style, and generally his stand on issues. But I don't always see eye to eye with him, and I don't agree with some of his views in his June 24 story, "Reforming the beast."

He criticizes the ACLU for opposing campaign contribution limits. Well, the ACLU opposes anything that is in violation of the Bill of Rights. The ACLU defends some pretty shady characters and groups, but to protect us all, we must protect the worst of us. I am a member of the ACLU, and I am sure we are doing it pretty much right, since we catch hell from the right, the left and the center. If we proceed to limit the talking that can be done with money because someone thinks it talks louder than words, then we might as well limit the length and volume of speech, because sometimes the guy who talks loudest and/or longest wins the argument. And he is often wrong. (How about that, Rush?) People are stronger than money, and speak louder.

I live in a conservative state, despite the fact that most voters are registered Democrats. The Democratic politicians are typical Boll-Weevils and the Republicans are worse. But my state senator has been in office four terms even though the *Daily Oklahoman* always runs editorials on the front page nearing election day that smear him. They hate him because he is one of the half-dozen true Democrats left in state government. He always has an opponent with the backing of the business leaders' money. But in him we have a man that works his ass off dur-

ing campaign time. He also has volunteers that work their asses off. Every door is knocked on by either the candidate or a volunteer, and if there is no response, a card is left asking that they call. As election day draws near, the candidate and volunteers are on the phone talking to people. On election day the phones are worked all day getting out his voters. And he wins. He gets the money he needs in \$5 and \$10 contributions, and he has lots of warm bodies that are willing to work and do what it takes. He doesn't give a damn that he gets terrible press, and fights an uphill battle. He thrives on it. And so do we volunteers.

There have been a couple of tough ones, including a real squeaker that the challenger contested. But it is all worth it. So instead of demanding that the government make campaigns easy for lazy candidates, get off your ass and get to work. People talk louder than money.

When I am razed by Republicans about our all-Republican congressional delegation, I just say, "We didn't work hard enough." And that is a true statement.

Bob Melton
Oklahoma City

Before Sweeney

David Moberg's essay on the Service Employees International Union ("Service with a smile," May 13) was interesting but failed the test of historical exactitude. The impression left was that John Sweeney (the current president of the AFL-CIO and past president of SEIU) engineered the great leap forward—"SEIU transformed itself over the past 15 years under the leadership of John Sweeney"—without once mentioning the name of George Hardy, the great innovator and one of two resident labor geniuses to which California can lay claim (the other, of course, was the ILWU's Harry Bridges).

Without taking anything away from Sweeney's serious accomplishments, we should not fail to acknowledge that Hardy—Sweeney's predecessor as

SEIU international president—created the union pulpit from which all consequent advances evolved.

Hardy, with union roots in San Francisco's great general strike of 1934, took over the West Coast SEIU in 1948, which in those days answered to the name of Building Service Employees, essentially a rag-tag band of janitors, bowling alley pinboys and health workers united by a single factor: low economic status.

By the time he retired as international president in 1980, Hardy had transformed the union into a leading contender in the public employee field, added hundreds of thousands of members, and created the cadre that enabled Sweeney to forge ahead.

Hardy was a series of contradictions bound together by some mighty strengths. He was, for example, a hawk during the Vietnam conflict and no coddler of the left; yet, earlier, when two "red" local unions belonging to an international driven from the AFL-CIO during the McCarthy madness came to him for affiliation, he took them in. They eventually formed the nucleus of SEIU's sweep into public service.

At a time when most unions refused to hire college kids, Hardy developed a pipeline that regularly pumped spanking fresh college graduates into his staff system. He found that by allowing just a tincture of ideology, he could get the college kids to work hard as hell for long hours at just a pittance of what salaried staff in other unions might expect. This practice helped make SEIU the most aggressive and successful organizer in California.

In some respects, Hardy might be likened to John L. Lewis. The great John L., it must be remembered, drove the left out of the mine workers union with a very heavy hand. Yet when he led the movement to form the CIO after walking away from the AFL, he welcomed the reds back, and they led in much of the industrial union organizing that ensued.

Charles Reiter
Sacramento, Calif.

InSHORT



National Labor Relations Board ruled last summer that the two newspapers violated several labor laws in causing and prolonging the strike. The labor board's rulings give workers the right to reclaim their jobs at any time. But for now, union leaders have discouraged this, since strikers would be required to return unconditionally—that is, to work initially without a contract. Still, they may offer to do so in the future.

Meanwhile, the strike has considerably weakened the dailies. Some newspaper executives now admit they misjudged their vulnerability to union-led advertising and circulation boycotts. In June, combined ad revenue was down 26 percent from pre-strike levels, according to newspaper executives. Although the newspapers refuse to release sworn or audited circulation figures, informally they claim a combined paid circulation of about 600,000 on weekdays and about 800,000 on Sunday—a decline of 30 percent since the strike began.

Union officials, however, maintain that combined paid circulation has dropped even lower, to 409,000 on weekdays and 564,000 on Sunday. They base their estimates on internal documents showing a huge backlog of unpaid subscriber bills.

Before the strike, Detroit Newspapers, the jointly owned production and distribution company formed by the partial merger of the *News* and *Free Press* in 1989, was generating profit margins in the high single digits. That's

ENDGAME IN DETROIT STRIKE?

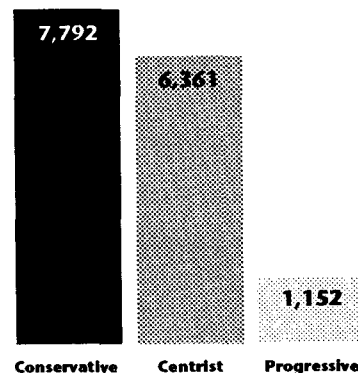
Last July 13, employees at Detroit's two daily newspapers—this writer included—went on strike in what they saw as a battle for the survival of their unions. Within a few weeks, managers concluded that they had beaten the unions, pure and simple. Despite aggressive attempts by strikers

to block the papers' printing plant gates, the *Detroit News* and *Free Press* continued to publish uninterrupted.

One year later, however, management has little to cheer about. Striking workers have gained the preliminary assurance that they cannot be permanently replaced by management. The

Think tank thunk

WHO DOES THE MAINSTREAM MEDIA TURN TO FOR EXPERT OPINIONS? CONSERVATIVE and centrist think tanks, writes Michael Dolny in *EXTRA!*, the publication of Fairness & Accuracy In Reporting, the progressive media watch group. Dolny analyzed the number of times in 1995 that 24 major think tanks were quoted in Nexis, an electronic database that contains the contents of major newspapers and the transcripts from prominent radio and TV shows. The Heritage Foundation, a far-right propaganda factory, heads the list with 2,268 citations, followed closely by the centrist Brookings Institution with 2,192 mentions to its name. The American Enterprise Institute and the Cato Institute, both conservative, were next in line with 1,297 and 1,163 citations respectively. The most-quoted progressive think tank, the Economic Policy Institute, ranked 15th on the list with 399 citations. —Joel Bleifuss



APALL-O-METER

THE IN THESE TIMES INDEX OF INDECENCIES

By David Futrelle

Pork McNuggets 8.5

When politicians begin looking about for possible budget cuts, they never forget the neediest. But they do seem to overlook a few of the bigger welfare kings and queens. A recent *Boston Globe* report on corporate welfare uncovered some choice slabs of pork: \$4 million to help Gallo unload its wine worldwide; nearly \$2 million to help Ronald McDonald sell Chicken McNuggets in the Third World. And in a burst of creativity that topped the \$1 billion it recently wrangled from Uncle Sam, defense contractor Lockheed Martin also billed the

government \$20,000 for golf balls—an “entertainment” expense. The *Globe* estimates that the total cost for such corporate welfare—in both indirect subsidies and tax breaks—comes to \$150 billion a year.

Discouraging word 6.4

Microsoft recently raised a few hackles south of the border, Reuters reports, when several Mexican users discovered that the Spanish-language thesaurus software accompanying Word for Windows 6.0 suggested that proper synonyms for “Indian” included “man-eater” and “savage.” The word “Western” brought up a rather different set of synonyms: “white” and “civilized.”

Out of the Doledrums 3.2

The original headline on a news story posted on the World Wide Web by the Reuters news service: “Dole Wants Violent Teen Action.” Appar-

ently afraid this would be taken to suggest that the candidate had shaved his head and joined a gang, the news service later changed the headline to the more sober and much less suggestive “Dole Urges Adult Prosecution of Violent Teens.”

Suiting up 6.3

A disbarred California attorney who describes himself as “a cross between Don Quixote, Ralph Nader and Charles Keating” has made a name for himself as the state’s most extreme litigator, the *Los Angeles Times* reports. David Marc Greenstein, the author of a self-published book entitled *Sue and Grow Rich*, has filed between 100 and 200 lawsuits against various people and companies who have somehow, he feels, done him wrong. Some of Greenstein’s suits—such as the one against Slim Fast for putting its diet bars in “misleadingly” large packages—seem almost public-spirited. Others, however, give the appearance of being slightly more petty, such as the failed \$250,000 suit he and his wife filed against a beauty salon for allegedly botching her haircut.

lyst Ben Bagdikian suggests, that may not be enough to save the papers: “The newspaper’s management is throwing away the most valuable asset they have: readers who not only depend on their news but trust it.”

—John Lippert

DOMINICAN DECISION

A day after the Dominican Republic’s startlingly orderly June 30 presidential runoff election, a cartoon in the *Listín Diario* newspaper summed up the road ahead. Carrying a shield marked “good intentions,” the fresh-faced winner, Leonel Fernández, pauses with his sword drawn at the black, menacing entrance of a medieval cave marked “the future.” It could well be marked “the past” as well.

When the 42-year-old lawyer takes office on August 16, he’ll have to mend a country deeply divided by a campaign marked by racial slurs against the losing candidate José Francisco Peña Gómez (who is black), personal attacks from both sides, and intimidation of the press. More importantly, Fernández will have to prove that he can be independent of outgoing 89-year-old, seven-term President Joaquín Balaguer, whose last-minute support clinched Fernández’s victory.

A look back at the national elections two years ago drives home just how much of a turning point the June 30 election was for this country, where every past election has sparked a political crisis. In 1994, when Peña Gómez ran against Balaguer, final results were not announced for three months. Even then, the election was widely believed to be stolen. Under heavy pressure from the United States and other countries, Balaguer had to agree to step down two years early and hold new elections.

This year, by contrast, decisive—and more importantly, reliable—results



© 1996 TERRY LABAN

twice what Detroit automakers earn. But it’s just half of the 20 percent margin that Wall Street expects from newspapers, and that Gannett Co. Inc., which owns the *News*, generates in many small, non-union towns.

In 1995 and 1996, the strike is expected to cost \$250 million in losses and missed profits. Anthony Ridder, chairman of Knight-Ridder, which owns the *Free Press*, recently expressed doubts that the strike will

ever be settled. Many readers lost during the strike, he said, are gone forever. If he’s right, the strike won’t pay for itself for decades, if ever. John Morton, a Wall Street media analyst, says he expects the *News* to collapse.

Detroit Newspapers CEO Frank Vega boasts that while he’s been abandoned by union readers who shop at Sam’s Warehouse, he’s retained readers who shop at Neiman-Marcus. But as University of California media ana-

were tabulated within 12 hours. The New York-raised Fernández, virtually unknown until former leftist President Juan Bosch picked him as his 1994 running mate in the center-left Dominican Liberation Party (PLD), garnered 51.25 percent of the vote. Peña Gómez, 59, a three-time presidential candidate for the Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD), also on the center-left of the political spectrum, pulled in 48.75 percent. Peña Gómez had led Fernández in the first-round May 16 ballot by seven percentage points but fell short of an outright majority.

Whereas two years ago Peña Gómez refused to accept Balaguer's victory, this time he conceded gracefully within a day. For his part, Fernández spoke of reconciliation and teamwork. "We need the participation of organized civil society," he said in a recent interview. "Dominican society is demanding that."

Fernández talks the talk. But it remains to be seen whether he will be able to escape the long shadows of the two strongmen of the Dominican political gerontocracy, President Balaguer and former President Juan Bosch, both conspicuously absent from the ballot for the first time in decades.

Bosch's 1964 ouster led to civil war and a U.S. invasion to prevent him from returning to power. A one-time puppet president under dictator Rafael Trujillo, Balaguer later convinced the United States that he could bring stability to the country, and with U.S. support, defeated Bosch in 1966. Using a combination of repression and patronage, Balaguer has held power for 22 of the last 30 years. Bosch has led the opposition, but never again became president (though he came very close to defeating Balaguer in the fraud-marred 1990 election).

The two ailing leaders buried decades of enmity to back Fernández in the runoff under an alliance called the National Patriotic Front. The deal was this: In exchange for a promise to keep the Dominican civil service intact, Balaguer promised Fernández the first-round votes that had gone to Jacinto Peynado, the candidate of

Our daily pesticide

THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION (FDA) CLAIMS THAT ONLY 3.1 PERCENT of the fruits and vegetables sold in American supermarkets are contaminated with illegal amounts of pesticides. However, Peter Montague reports in the May 9 issue of *Rachel's Environment and Health Weekly* that this figure seriously underestimates the problem. FDA technicians first test produce for pesticides and then enter the results on a computer. But the computer program does not automatically compare these data to legal tolerance levels; technicians are left to make those comparisons with paper and pencil. According to a review of FDA test results by the Environmen-



tal Working Group of Washington, D.C., this paper-and-pencil method catches only 57 percent of the violations found in the laboratory. The FDA's failure to report the remaining 43 percent of violations is due either to arithmetic error or to willful neglect. Furthermore, 90 percent of all FDA pesticide testing involves procedures that are able to detect residues from only half of the pesticide poisons used on food crops. Techniques that would find the other half are too expensive for routine use. —J.B.

Balaguer's Reformist Social Christian Party (PRSC).

Though both the PLD and the *Reformistas* insist that they made "a pact without commitments," it's not clear what else Balaguer will ask for now that Fernández has won. At the very least, the old man will remain a strong political force. "I can see Leonel going to see him every day" says Bernardo Vega, a noted historian who has conducted opinion polls for both Fernández and Peña Gómez.

Only one of the 30 senators and 12 of the 120 representatives in the lower house of Congress belong to Fernández's party. So the new president will depend on the 51 congressional and 15 senatorial votes that Balaguer controls. Sorely needed political and judicial reforms may therefore have to wait two years until after mid-term congressional elections.

"Thirty years since the death of Trujillo, we still haven't begun to resolve the basic problems," says Luis Vargas, director of the Institute of Dominican Studies. "There is hope.

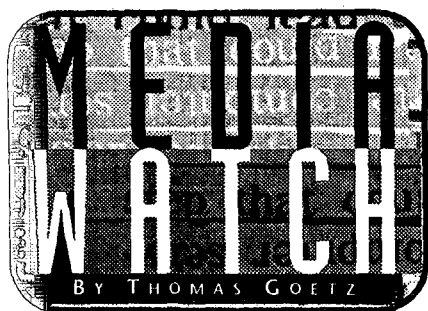
But the gravity and complexity of the problems of our people, the lack of institutions all suggest a more negative outlook."

—Michele Wucker

MUM'S THE WORD

A number of corporations are involved in a nationwide push to gain new secrecy and immunity rights. The corporations, many known for environmental and workplace safety problems, include chemical and mining companies, paper manufacturers and electronics firms.

Largely as a result of intense lobbying on the part of these corporations, 19 states across the country have passed "environmental audit privilege" legislation. These laws grant companies the right to withhold internal environmental audits from citizens and regulators. Ten of these states have also granted companies immunity



Political potboilers

Just when it seemed dead on arrival, the presidential race is again showing signs of a pulse. Unfortunately, the campaign season owes its resuscitation not to bold policy statements or stirring oratory, but to book releases—and bad ones at that. Political books are everywhere in the news, and even the most dubious authors are gaining wide—and mostly uncritical—coverage.

While Bob Woodward has done little more than rehash PR releases in his new book, *The Choice*, he wields the clout to garner appearances on *Larry King Live* and every other forum. But you have to wonder what earns former White House security agent Gary Aldrich's *Unlimited Access* similar attention. Published by Regnery Gateway, *Unlimited Access* is an uninspired, vengeful screed, infused with gossip and wholesale fabrication. None of it can be considered news, but most news organizations played up Aldrich's fourth-hand stories about President Clinton sneaking out at night for illicit rendezvous. Not even the GOP-dominated House committee investigating Filegate—which has worked overtime to dredge up sleaze on Clinton—considered Aldrich reputable enough to subpoena. But that didn't stop ABC, among others, from inviting the author onto their programs for priceless exposure. On *This Week With David Brinkley*, ABC's premier political program, Sam Donaldson dutifully challenged some of Aldrich's more preposterous allegations, but the guys at Regnery House couldn't have noticed—they were likely too busy handling the stream of book orders.

Bought by the notoriously reactionary Phillips Publishing in 1993, Regnery made its mark in the 1950s with William F. Buckley's *God and Man at Yale*, transforming Buckley from a conservative gadfly of the Eastern liberal establishment into a cultural celebrity. This time, they have turned a disgruntled former employee armed with innuendo and hearsay into a major campaign story. And summer is supposed to be the slow season for publishing.

Happiness is a warm (fuzzy) gun

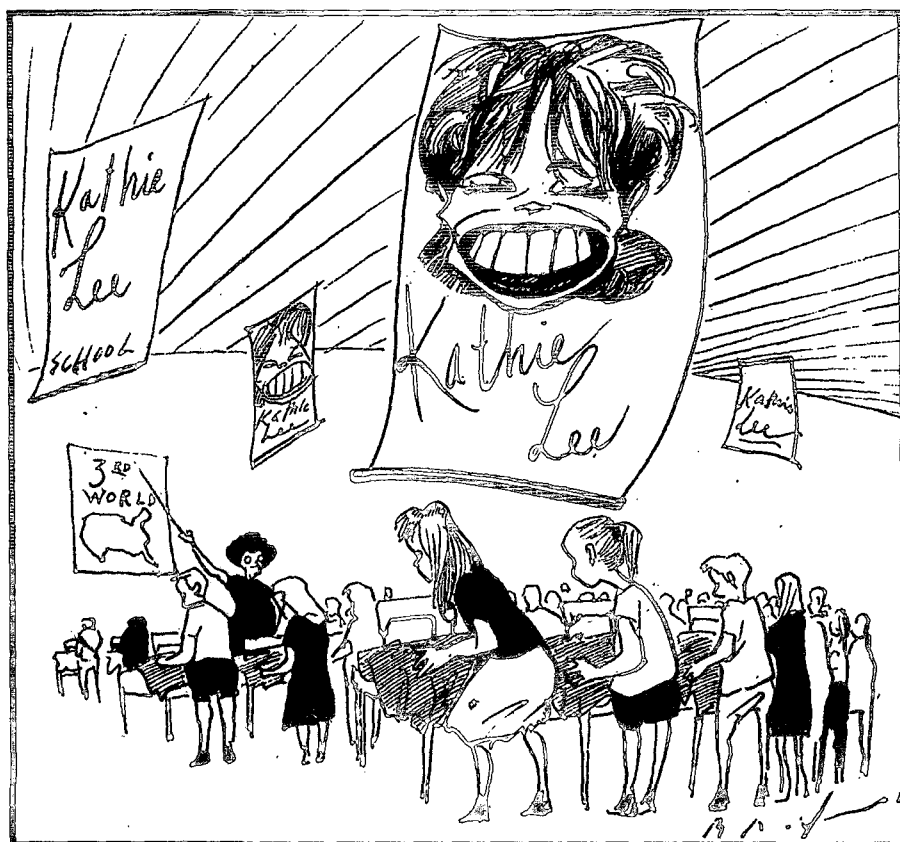
The FBI recently revealed that the Viper Militia, a right-wing group in Arizona, may have been plotting to blow up two federal buildings as the opening salvo in its "upcoming war" with the federal government. It's enough to test your faith in America's patriot movement.

But rest assured—there are still plenty of patriots eager to show you the sunny side of anti-government activism.

Just check out *Perceptions*, a California-based bimonthly magazine that reveals "facts about Government, Health and Metaphysics." Not to be confused with more militant publications like *Soldier of Fortune* and *The Lamplighter*, *Perceptions* is perhaps the world's only far-right New Age magazine, blending anti-government vitriol with holistic medicine and organic recipes. Articles from recent issues include "Cosmic Top Secret: UFO Disclosure vs. National Security," "Microwave Madness: The Effects of Microwave Apparatus on Humans," and "Confessions of a Vegan Cattle Rancher." So pick up a glass of carrot juice and forget about the black helicopters surveying your land for a moment. *Perceptions* is the most feel-good paranoia you'll read all day.

TOMORROW'S NEWS TONIGHT

By Steve Brodner



Privatized education catches on. "Kathie Lee" schools prove profitable.

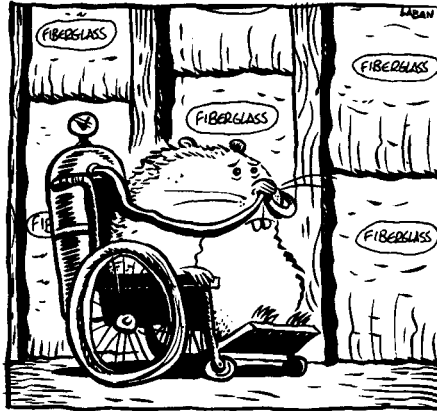
from penalties for violations they discover during the auditing process.

Proponents of these new laws argue that government regulation has failed and companies should be allowed to police themselves. Environmental audit privilege, they maintain, helps businesses to comply with environmental laws without fear of retribution or fines.

Opponents argue that companies want to hide information and sidestep liability for harmful activities and operations. Recent experience in Idaho, which passed an environmental audit privilege bill in 1995, seems to support this claim. During a surprise inspection this past winter, state inspectors discovered hazardous waste violations at the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory, a nuclear reactor and waste facility operated by Lockheed under a contract with the federal government. As inspectors were leaving the site, company officials gave them a copy of an internal environmental audit covering some of the same violations—apparently in an attempt to avoid prosecution and penalties, and to keep the violation secret.

State environmental audit privilege laws may likewise undermine the enforcement powers of the federal Clean Air Act, say top EPA officials. Title V of the act requires states to enforce the terms and conditions of operating permits for stationary sources of air pollution, such as oil refineries and power plants. As part of this enforcement authority, states may impose penalties for violations. By granting companies immunity from penalties through environmental audit privilege, however, states effectively restrict this authority.

In an April 5 memorandum, the EPA set out a new policy recommending that Title V program approval be denied to states whose laws provide immunity from civil penalties for repeat violations, violations of previous court or administrative orders, violations resulting in serious harm or risk of



Fiberglass, the hidden danger

JUST SIX MONTHS INTO A TWO-YEAR STUDY, hamsters exposed in a Swedish laboratory to fine fiberglass dust have developed tiny tumor-like growths in their lungs. According to a preliminary report on the study that was just released to the EPA, the hamsters also experienced damage to the nuclei of cells in the lungs. The study, sponsored by the North American Insulation Manufacturers

Association (NAIMA), was intended to demonstrate that the inhalation of dust from fiberglass insulation dust was safe. *The Glassroots of Cancer*, a journal published by the Victims of Fiberglass, reports that NAIMA used hamsters in the experiments at the urging of the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration. (Since previous research had determined that hamsters were more sensitive to lung contamination than rats, NAIMA-sponsored research has to date used only rats.) A final report on the hamster study is due out in late 1997. For more information on the dangers of fiberglass and the industry's attempts to cover up those dangers, see "The First Stone," August 21, 1995. —J.B.

harm, or violations resulting in substantial economic benefit to the violator. The EPA followed up this policy in June by publishing notices in the *Federal Register* approving interim Title V delegation for Idaho and Texas, but denying final delegation unless they revise their audit privilege laws.

The EPA also plans to develop national guidelines for evaluating whether state environmental audit privilege laws jeopardize a state's ability to enforce federal programs under the Clean Water Act and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act.

Citizens' groups and environmental organizations are encouraging the EPA to keep pressure on the states to maintain adequate enforcement authority for federal environmental programs. Carl Pope, executive director of the Sierra Club, and Cynthia Koehler, senior attorney of the Natural Heritage Institute, recently wrote to EPA Administrator Carol Browner and threatened to petition for the removal of such programs from states that choose to pass sweeping environmental audit privilege laws.

—Kevin Williams

TURKEY'S NEW COALITION

Turkey's new government, a coalition of the Islamic fundamentalist Welfare Party (Refah) and the center-right True Path Party (DYP), received the necessary vote of confidence in parliament on July 8. An agreement to rotate the premiership makes fundamentalist leader Necmettin Erbakan prime minister for two years, to be followed by DYP leader Tansu Çiller for another two.

The country effectively had no government since September 1995, when a coalition between DYP and the social democratic Republican People's Party (CHP) collapsed after five years in power. The government fell apart when CHP withdrew from the coalition under pressure from a strike by 400,000 public sector workers. Prime Minister and DYP leader Tansu Çiller then cobbled together another coalition, which failed to secure a vote of confidence in parliament.

A caretaker government called a general election on December 24, but

© 1996 TERRY LABAN

the results were inconclusive. While Refah drew the highest vote, with 30 percent, five parties polled between 10 and 30 percent each. Three months of endless negotiations and horse-trading followed, as the parties attempted to create a viable coalition.

Finally, DYP and the center-right Motherland Party (ANAP) formed a coalition in March, under pressure from military leaders who wanted to keep the fundamentalists out of government. This was the "dream coalition" desired by the business community and the West ever since the Turkish political scene fragmented irreparably in the late 1980s. The two parties have staked out a pro-Western foreign policy and favor trade liberalization and privatization. But despite these similarities, their bitter rivalry turned the coalition into a farce within a few weeks.

The rise of the fundamentalists has been the most noticeable feature of Turkish politics for the past two years. It first became apparent that they were becoming a serious force when Refah earned more than 20 percent of the popular vote and captured the municipalities of Istanbul, Ankara and other major towns in the nationwide local elections of 1994. They finally emerged as the largest party (though well short of an overall majority) last December. In early June of this year, the fundamentalists further increased their share of the vote in local elections, while all other parties suffered a decline.

The fundamentalists' success can only be understood in terms of the utter failure of the other major parties. In the very week that Refah spectacularly captured the municipality of Istanbul, the national government doubled the prices of all public sector goods and services in response to a severe currency crisis. Living standards across the board were halved overnight. The privatization program—the government's panacea to all economic ills—has put several hundred thousand workers out of work. Many more will join them if the new coalition government continues the program. Several years of inflation not far below 100 percent have

made deep inroads into real wages, particularly in the public sector.

Workers and the urban poor living in shantytowns around the major cities could not look to the parliamentary left as a solution. The social democrats were part of the coalition government between 1991 and the end of last year—that is, part of the problem. The mainstream center-right parties had little to differentiate them and finally exposed themselves as inept and self-serving when they formed the government in March.

The fundamentalists have thus been able to project themselves as radical, anti-establishment, clean and honest. They talk not of Allah, but of opposing privatization; not of prophets, but of unemployment. Their program is largely ambiguous and unrealistic. It's unlikely that they will follow through on threats to withdraw from the customs union with the European Union as well as from NATO and other

Western bodies. In power, particularly in a coalition which is likely to be no more stable than previous ones, they will almost certainly lose their radical image and, with it, their support.

—Ronnie Margulies

SOURCES

John Lippert is the Detroit *Free Press* labor writer and a member of Newspaper Guild Local 22.

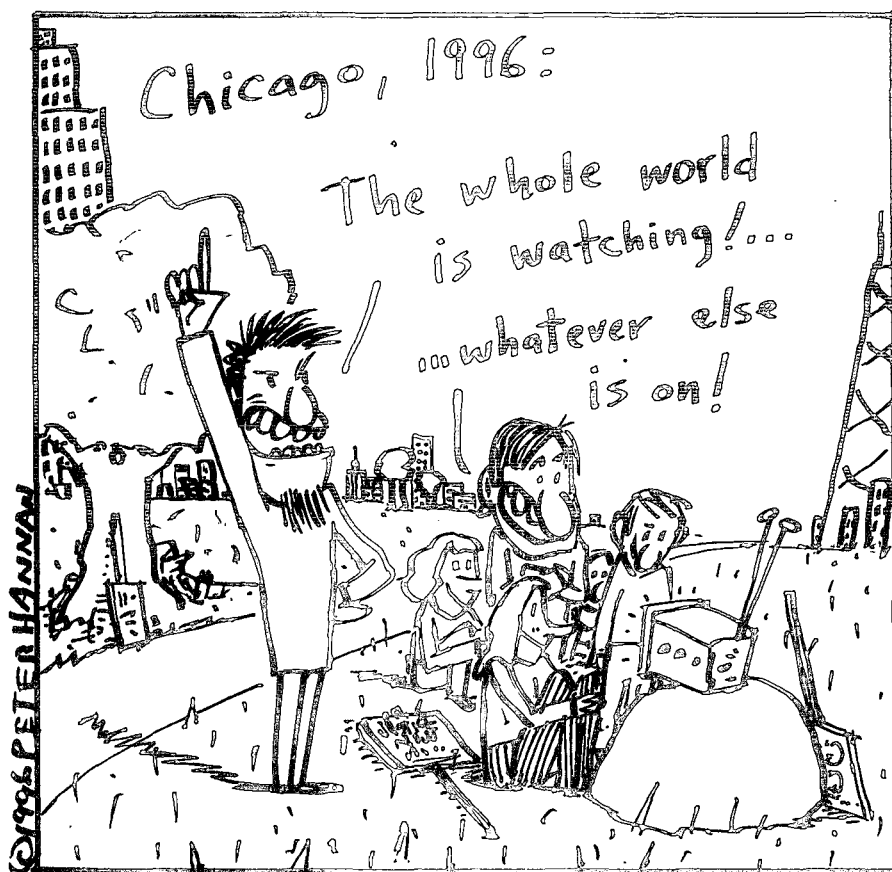
Michele Wucker is a freelance journalist based in New York.

Kevin Williams is a Colorado-based organizer for the Western Organization of Resource Councils. A version of this article appeared in the May 1996 issue of the *Western Organizing Review*. (Subscriptions: \$20 for one year. Write Western Organization of Resource Councils, 2401 Montana Ave., Suite 301, Billings, MT 59101.)

Ronnie Margulies is an economist and journalist based in London.

THE ADVENTURES OF A HUGE MOUTH

By Peter Hannan



THE FIRST STONE

SAVE THE OCEANS—AND THE FISHERMEN

By Joel Bleifuss

The world's fisheries—the fish who live in them and the humans who live off them—are in dire straits. Just as clear-cutting has extinguished many of the world's old-growth forests, overfishing has decimated whole marine ecosystems. One after another, overfishing is scouring out the world's 17 major fisheries, permanently altering their ecological balance. According to the U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organization, four of the 17 are already depleted and nine have declining fish populations. This destruction is accompanied by a loss of livelihood in fishing communities. What's more, the scarcity of fish has raised its market price, depriving the world's non-wealthy people of what was once a cheap source of protein.

The unrestrained slaughter of marine life is different from the pell-mell felling of the world's forests: The destruction that occurs below the ocean's surface is hidden from view, and thus ignored by everyone but the people directly affected. After all, who wants to hug a fish?

In the Bering Sea off the coast of Alaska, overfishing of groundfish—the fish that live near the ocean bottom, such as sole, pollack and Pacific cod—has led to dramatic declines in the seabird and sea-mammal populations. The harbor seal rookery on Tugidak Island in the western Gulf of Alaska, once the largest in the state, has shrunk to about 15 percent of its size in the mid-1970s.

Fred Munson of Greenpeace's U.S. Fisheries Campaign says that the obvious cause of this decline is overfishing in the Bering Sea. But scientists at the National Marine Fisheries Service, the federal agency that oversees U.S. fisheries, maintain that there is no proof that the decline in the sea-mammal population in the Bering Sea is related to the contemporaneous decline in the fish population that these sea mammals feed on. Munson says: "It's like scientists from the Tobacco Institute saying you can't prove that smoking causes cancer. Like many regulatory bodies, the National

Marine Fisheries Service is captured by the industry it regulates."

In the Gulf of Mexico off the southeast coast of the United States, trawling for shrimp has extinguished much of the native fish population. In the 1970s, Gulf shrimpers would regularly catch 10 pounds of fish for every one pound of shrimp. Those wasted fish, known as "bycatch," were thrown overboard. By the 1980s, the Gulf's population of groundfish had been decimated. Michael Weber and Judith Gradwohl write in *The Wealth of Oceans* that this unregulated shrimping "may well have changed the ecosystem of the Gulf of Mexico into one based on detritus and dominated by shrimps, crabs and sharks."

Off Canada's eastern coast, what was once one of the world's largest fisheries is now considered "commercially extinct."

Likewise, along Georges Bank off the New England coast, flounder, cod and haddock are in steep decline. As a result of overfishing, the groundfish population fell by 65 percent between 1977 and 1987. It's open to question whether Georges Bank can recover. The Massachusetts Groundfish Task Force reported in 1990 that overfishing had led to the loss of \$350 million in annual revenues and 14,000 jobs.

Greenpeace is working with fishermen in its U.S. Fisheries Campaign to ensure that national and international fishing regulations preserve both marine ecosystems and human fishing communities. By forging alliances with the people most affected by conservation efforts, Greenpeace hopes to avoid the mistakes made by environmentalists who, in their rush to protect the forests of the Pacific Northwest, alienated local loggers.

"We are working directly with the fishing communities and smaller-scale fishermen because families that have been fishing for generations have the most at stake in this idea of sustainable fisheries," says Greenpeace Executive Director Barbara Dudley. "And obviously, there is a common struggle against the large agribusiness corporations that are coming in and vacuuming the oceans." Dudley, who in the 1960s was a lawyer for California farmworkers, was named Greenpeace executive director in 1992. Her appointment was a visible sign of the growing understanding among Greenpeace's board members that environmental preservation and economic justice are intertwined.

Sue Sabella, Greenpeace's ocean-ecology coordinator, directs the U.S. Fisheries Campaign from Washington, D.C. The campaign's goal, she says, is to find "common ground" with smaller-scale fishermen in three targeted areas: New England, the Pacific Northwest and Alaska. These fishermen understand the need for conservation. "We see it as a jobs and an environment issue, and the smaller-scale folks, in general, see it that way as well," says Sabella.

Many of these fishermen fear, as Greenpeace does, that some of the conservation measures being proposed in Congress would favor multinational behemoths like Tyson Foods and American Sea Foods (part of a Norwegian conglomerate) at the expense of independent fishermen. The precedent has already been set: Federal agriculture policy has enabled agribusiness giants to dominate food production at the expense of the family farmer and rural communities. Ditto for U.S. forest policy.

Sabella is working alongside fishermen who have come to lobby Congress, which will vote this month on whether to reauthorize the Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Known as the Magnuson Act, this law has, since 1976, regulated fishing in the United States' 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). In addition to making sure that the House and Senate consider marine conservation, Sabella and the independent fishermen are lobbying against an Individual Transferable Quota (ITQ) system, a proposed method of conservation that would privatize U.S. fishing grounds. Under an ITQ system, the yearly catch in U.S. waters would be divided up into shares, with the owner of each fishing vessel granted ITQs in direct proportion to the size of their catch in previous years. Once the boat owner has those shares, he may sell them like a commodity on the open market.

"Greenpeace is opposed to laws that turn fisheries into private property, do not cover conservation, and pose monopoly dangers," says Sabella. "We have looked at other ITQ programs around the world, and we are not convinced that they have done anything to make fisheries sustainable and ecologically compatible."

In Congress, ITQs are championed by Washington's two senators, Democrat Patty Murray and Republican Slade Gorton. They have threatened a filibuster to stop reauthorization of the Magnuson Act because it does not include ITQs. Both senators are firmly in the pocket of the Seattle-based factory fishing industry. According to the Center for Responsive Politics, between 1991 and 1995 Gorton received \$66,600 from fishy interests while freshman Murray received \$30,300.

The U.S. factory trawling fleet, which uses Seattle as its home port and fishes in the Bering Sea and the Gulf of Alaska, is made up of about 50 boats, some of which are longer than a football field. The nets that these boats drag through the water—scraping the fragile ocean floor—have openings large enough to fit 12 jumbo jets. With each haul of the net, these floating factories catch up to 350,000 pounds of fish.

With Georges Bank fished out, about 60 percent of all the fish caught within the United States' 200-mile EEZ are groundfish that live in the Gulf of Alaska and the Bering

Sea. About 1,900 U.S.-flagged boats, 50 of which are factory trawlers, fish in those fisheries. Those 50 trawlers catch 60 percent of all the groundfish in the North Pacific. This leaves 40 percent for the remaining 1,850 smaller boats.

Any ITQ system would greatly benefit the corporate fishing factories. "ITQs turn fish into private property and fishing into a property right," says Munson. "The No. 1 defining factor of who can fish is how much money you have." Besides which, the factory fishing fleet is unsustainable both ecologically and economically. "These are \$40 million boats," says Munson. "They need to catch so many fish in order to survive economically. That puts too much pressure on the ecosystem." A good part of the factory fishing fleet is on the verge of bankruptcy. But since those boats have caught a lot of fish, if an ITQ system were put in place, the boats' corporate owners would be allotted ITQs worth hundreds of millions of dollars. They could then sell these ITQs and get out of the business with a tidy profit. Such a large sale would enable the corporations that plan to stay in the business to further consolidate their holdings.

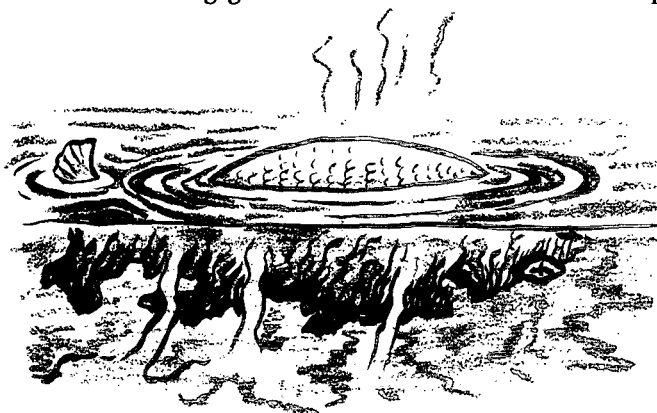
Greenpeace and the smaller-scale fishermen have been fighting for three provisions in the Magnuson Act that would regulate the fishing industry and curb the worst abuses of the factory trawling fleet. First, they want a measure that would reduce the permissible amount of bycatch. Currently 560 million pounds of bycatch

are wasted each year by factory trawlers as they scoop up groundfish in the North Pacific. Second, Greenpeace and its allies support measures to protect essential marine fishery habitats. These measures include limiting the use of the destructive nets that factory trawlers drag behind them. Third, they want a provision in the bill that would instruct federal agencies to take into account the needs of coastal fishing communities when drawing up fishery management plans.

Greenpeace has found common ground on this issue with anti-environmentalist congressmen like Sen. Ted Stevens (R-AL), who has a history of supporting fishery conservation, and fair-weather environmentalist President Bill Clinton.

As far as the Magnuson Act goes, Sabella says Greenpeace's strategy of cooperating with fishermen has worked. "We wouldn't have gotten anywhere if we hadn't sought out the input from fishing communities," she says. "Where we have had people on the ground working with folks trying to find common ground and a way forward on different issues, there is at least mutual respect, even if folks don't agree with our entire agenda." ◀

Next issue: What's what in the great dolphin debate.



POLITICS

In the trenches

*The New Party
looks to build
an urban-
oriented
political
movement
from the
ground up.*

By James Weinstein

Four years after it was formed in 1992, the New Party is learning to navigate the twists and turns of the American political system and stay afloat. This alone would be a major achievement, since for more than 70 years all nationwide electoral efforts left of the Democratic Party have failed, most often miserably. These failures can be attributed, in part, to some common weaknesses: All left third-party efforts since the New Deal of the '30s have begun, and squandered their resources, by focusing on presidential contests. None has given much thought to the strong ties that their most likely constituencies have to the Democratic Party. And none has had a strategy that combined a determination to win elections with a recognition of the need to begin modestly, at a level appropriate to its initial resources.

By avoiding these errors, the New Party has grown steadily and is well situated to develop into a significant player in the political life of the nation. One reason for the New Party's early success is that it started from the bottom, in much the same way that the Christian Coalition began on the right. Unlike the Labor Party (see "Labor pains," June 24), the New Party is based on the belief that to build a political movement, you must participate in elections on behalf of your beliefs and proposals. Nonetheless, the party is flexible in the ways it intervenes in the electoral arena.

So far the New Party has run candidates mostly for municipal or county offices, with a few state legislative offices thrown in—and it has won in 94 of the 140 elections in which it has participated. In its first three years, some 80 percent of the New Party's candidates have run in non-partisan elections, another 15 percent have run in Democratic primaries, and fewer than 5 percent of its candidates have appeared on the ballot under a local New Party name. This has made it possible for the party to win support from labor and African-American groups that also have strong ties to the Democratic Party.

Another reason for its early success, co-founder Joel Rogers says, is that unlike the left in general, the New Party understands the centrality of city-based politics, and so has concentrated on inner-city issues such as the living-wage campaign. This has enabled the party to cross racial lines, and to build an organization in which some 40 percent of its members are African-American—a necessity for any successful city-based progressive party.

Defending cities may seem elementary, since that's where some 80 percent of the decline in manufacturing employment has occurred over the past decade, and where a host of social problems have followed. As Rogers points out, virtually all of the jobs lost have been union jobs, which has meant not only high levels of unemployment for workers, but also heavy losses in membership and political influence for unions. Yet the left has had no coherent program to defend cities. Labor has made no concerted effort to protect its traditional strongholds, nor have other parts of the left. The environmental movement, for example, has paid little attention to urban decay. Instead, the largest environmental groups have concentrated on the countryside, even though cities and their immediate environs have suffered more heavily from environmental degradation associated with plant shut-downs and the loss of manufacturing jobs.

The New Party's practice, Rogers says, has reflected its understanding that a left politics must be both urban-based and urban-oriented, especially in its initial stages. This can be seen as a return to the left's pre-World War II emphasis on

municipal politics. But it also looks to the future, when cities could increasingly be the sites of advanced green production, high levels of social income, and a quality of social life that is largely defined by an abundance of public goods.

The New Party sees its devotion to living-wage campaigns as a first step toward unifying the natural left constituencies, and thereby winning back the cities. In Wisconsin, for example, the New Party merged in late 1993 with Progressive Milwaukee, a group of unionists that was tired of supporting candidates who turned their backs on labor once in office. Led by Bruce Colburn, secretary-treasurer of the Milwaukee Labor Council, the combined group has already elected several county supervisors and has won living-wage agreements at the city and school board levels. Now Progressive Milwaukee/New Party (PM/NP) is pushing a county ordinance that would require all contractors with the county to pay their employees at least \$7.70 per hour. Eight county commissioners have endorsed the measure, and PM/NP is gathering signatures on a petition to support the campaign. Similarly, in Missoula, Mont., New Party member and city council president Craig Sweet has presented a living-wage measure in the council. Other chapters are also waging campaigns for reinvestment in urban life—enhanced school funding, mass transit improvements, pedestrian and bike projects.

These are the kinds of things that New Party affiliates are now engaged in, but if the party is to develop into a truly national movement, more is needed. So far there has been some thinking and discussion along broader lines, although this has been mostly preliminary. The problem, as Rogers sees it, is for the New Party to develop a worldview capable of challenging the market-oriented ideology of business. Today, he points out, business is the only grouping strong enough to make its special interests appear as everybody's general interest. For the New Party, therefore, it's essential to develop and agree on a set of principles that, in Rogers' words, can be bigger than the sum of the particular parts that now comprise what is called the left.

Rogers and Daniel Cantor, another co-founder of the New Party, both believe that the next two years must be devoted to developing such an overarching worldview. This will entail many discussions in the chapters and in various



committees, the writing of position papers, and other such activities. That, and deciding on specific programs and legislative proposals that embody this developing set of principles, is seen as the necessary next step. Otherwise, even if the organization continues building, it will ultimately be thrown back onto a failed liberalism.

Indeed, the vision that seems to be taking shape looks beyond traditional ideas of the American left. It is predicated on the belief that welfare liberalism, or social democracy as it's known in Europe, has pretty much played itself out. In the most general sense, Rogers says, programs need to be developed that can impose humane values on the economy in the here and now. To show why this can't happen with the current liberal approach, he cites the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

OSHA illustrates the limits of the state's capacity to carry through policies, even assuming good intentions. Congress has established standards for health and safety in the workplace, Rogers explains, but these standards are frequently not met, and little or nothing is done about violations. That's in large part because the federal government is unable to monitor any significant portion of the dispersed, heterogeneous and incredibly numerous sites where these standards need to be applied. With 7 million worksites and limitless combinations of hazards, OSHA

had only 1,200 inspectors—even before the '94 cutbacks. That meant that each worksite could expect to be inspected once every 170 years.

Instead of relying on government oversight, Rogers proposes “a politics of association”—a partnership of the state and civil society—to build capacity outside the state. Thus he favors legislation that would set standards and then mandate workplace committees of workers and management to monitor the law themselves. That would create 60 million inspectors, each intimately familiar with local conditions and problems, and would empower people in a new way.

That, of course, is just one specific proposal that embodies the democratic and anti-bureaucratic politics being considered by New Party people. In addition, Rogers talks about something he calls “starting-gate equality”—the notion that the state should redistribute resources so that everyone at the beginning of his or her life has genuine equality of opportunity. The goal is to guarantee that every child is adequately fed, housed and educated up to the age of 20. Starting-gate equality would provide substantive, rather than legal, equal opportunity. And it would eliminate the need for much of the socially divisive forms of welfare and affirmative action that now pit low-income people against well-paid working people. Such a program would be universal, rather than means-tested, and would include

The numbers

At present the New Party has about 7,500 members, of which 4,500 are at-large, which means that they have paid an initiation fee and receive informational mailings. The other 3,000 belong to one of the New Party's 11 chapters. Of these, Progressive Minnesota, Progressive Milwaukee, Little Rock, Ark., Missoula, Mont., and Dane County, Wis. are the most active. Other chapters are in Chicago, Boston, Washington, Montgomery County, Md., Brooklyn, N.Y., and Nassau County, N.Y. New chapters are now being organized in St. Louis and Denver, as well as in Wisconsin's Racine/Kenosha, Fox Valley and Iowa County.

Not surprisingly, money is a major problem for the New Party. The budget for the national staff and office is now about \$500,000, and a similar amount goes to help chapters, nine of which now have paid organizers. Monthly contributions from sustainers average \$10 and bring in about \$11,500 per month. The party's short-term goal is 5,000 sustainers and \$50,000 per month. But Daniel Cantor estimates that the New Party will need 40,000 to 50,000 members and \$10 million a year in contributions to reach a critical mass and a spontaneous explosion of growth.

To contact the New Party, call 1-800-200-1294, check out their Web site at www.newparty.org, or send e-mail to newparty@newparty.org.

national health insurance as well.

In other words, Rogers advocates raising the social wage so that it would benefit the middle class as well as the poor, and then tax higher incomes (\$90,000 and up) to pay for it. There's plenty of room in our economy to do this, he points out, considering that the United States now devotes a smaller share of its GNP to social wages than any other industrialized country.

This kind of thinking gives the New Party its chance for long-term success. Yet, as a new political formation, the New Party faces the perennial third-party dilemma. On the one hand, it's clear that popular disgust with both major parties is widespread, and that millions of people would like to see a third, or, more accurately, a genuine second party. Ross Perot's vote in 1992 made that a point beyond dispute. On the other hand, the left's three major constituencies—labor, the African-American community and women—are also the core constituencies of the Democratic Party. They would not be likely to break those often intense relationships unless a rival party could offer convincing prospects of greater rewards for joining it.

This is clearest in the black community, where just about everyone votes Democratic, and, therefore, where the real contests for office occur in primary elections. In such communities, several party-like groupings often compete, but they all operate under the Democratic Party

A court challenge

The New Party's fusion challenge began in Minnesota when St. Paul state Rep. Andy Dawkins accepted the New Party's offer to run him on its ballot line in November 1994. This violated Minnesota law, so the state refused to list Dawkins on the second line.

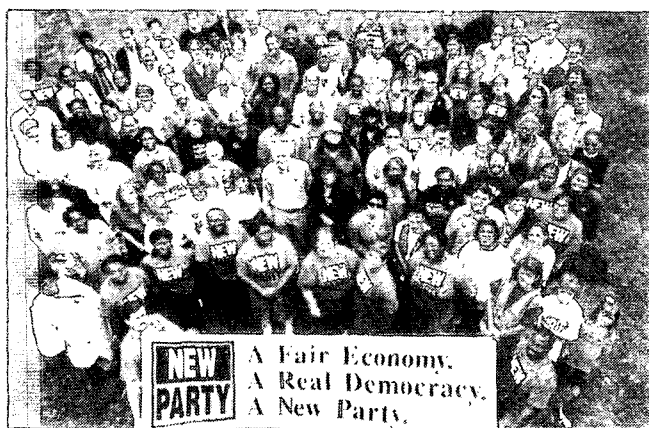
The New Party went to court to get the law changed. After losing at the trial level, the party won a 3-0 decision in the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, which ruled that forbidding fusion was unconstitutional. So, for now, fusion is legal in Minnesota, as well as in all the states that comprise the 8th Circuit. As a result of that ruling, Minnesota reluctantly changed the law, so that now a third party can circulate petitions to nominate candidates also running on the Democratic or Republican lines. But in violation of the 8th Circuit Court's explicit language, the new Minnesota law simply adds the second endorsing party's name to the original party line.

The New Party is also challenging this provision, and expects to win in time to provide Democratic Sen. Paul Wellstone and four state legislative candidates with a second ballot line in November. This will provide a test of Progressive Minnesota's strength, and may bring Wellstone some extra votes from those who cannot bring themselves to vote Democratic.

umbrella. Chicago Mayor Harold Washington used to make this point by talking about "the other party," referring not to the Republicans, who aren't a significant force even in white Chicago, but to the old Daley machine. And, of course, in such a situation, a third party would serve no purpose, except to marginalize its own adherents.

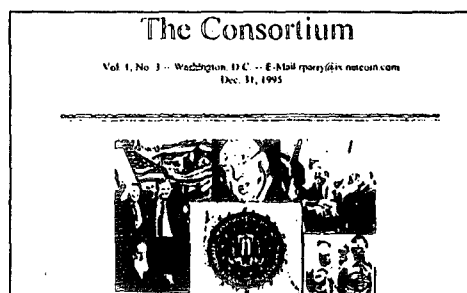
A similar problem exists with regard to the labor movement, which is heavily invested—in all meanings of the word—in the Democratic Party, and which is dependent for the few favors it receives on a supportive relationship with Democratic officeholders. To a lesser extent, the same is true of the organized women's movement.

The organizers of the New Party are fully aware of this dilemma and have responded to it with admirable flexibility. Their most visible effort has been the revival of fusion as a tactical device. Fusion allows a third party to endorse a candidate running in another party, as the American Labor Party did in New York in the '30s, when it provided Franklin Roosevelt and many other Democrats with a second ballot line. This is a tactic that labor, or a labor-friendly party, could use to reward its friends by cross-endorsing



and punish its enemies by abstaining. Unfortunately, however, only a handful of states—New York still among them—allow third parties to employ fusion. Undaunted, the New Party has challenged this restriction in court (see box on page 16).

Fusion would help break down labor's apprehension about the New Party's efforts, but even so, the use of the word "party" can still create difficulties. There is some talk within the New Party about this problem—in fact, local chapters typically don't use the word. In Minnesota, for example, when a statewide party organization was set up, the name was changed from Twin Cities New Party to "Progressive Minnesota, a New Party affiliate." This will facilitate the New Party running its own candidates in Democratic primaries, as it has already done in other states. And it will make it easier for the New Party to grow. Nor do party organizers seem to have a great deal at stake in the name. As Daniel Cantor says, "If this thing succeeds, it's not going to be the New Party in 10 years. It's going to be something much bigger."



Subscribe to 'The Consortium,' It's Re-Writing The History of This Political Era

Edited by award-winning journalist Robert Parry (who broke many of the Iran-Contra stories), The Consortium's first four issues have changed how Americans understand this corrupt political age: from its birth in 1980 to today.

The Consortium has already given readers dramatic national security exclusives that are found nowhere else:

- ♦ How the world's richest "players" helped Ronald Reagan's inner circle in 1980-1, with BCCI flying money to New York City by Concorde and the shah of Iran's family financing a slush fund in Hong Kong.
- ♦ How Congress suppressed a secret Russian government report detailing what the KGB knew about U.S. arms sales to Iran but the American people didn't.
- ♦ How the Clinton administration is retaliating against Iraqgate whistleblowers, while it considers the appointment of a former BCCI lawyer to police drug money-laundering.

So check out The Consortium free on the Web at <http://www.delve.com/consort.html> -- and subscribe for the paper version, so you won't miss any of the revelations.

I am enclosing a check or money order for \$39 payable to the Media Consortium, for the first 15 issues of The Consortium (on paper).

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/ZIP _____

I'm also contributing _____ to keep The Consortium free on the Web. ♦

Mail to: The Media Consortium, Suite 102-231, 2200 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA 22201. (Not a tax-exempt organization)

MEDIA

Giveaway of the century

*Broadcasters
are making a
silent grab
for the new
spectrum
allotted for
digital TV on
the public
airwaves.*

By Sam Hussein

By 1933, Lee De Forest was angry. The radio pioneer was not happy with how his labor was being used. In the previous decade, educational institutions and hobbyists had been forced off the air or onto secondary stations by government agencies acting largely as proxies for the commercial broadcasters. De Forest told one audience, "To be known as the 'Father of Broadcasting' was once an honor of which I was proud, but I'm disgusted and ashamed of my pet child." He called commercial broadcasting in the United States "a vulgar, cheapjack show designed solely to coax dollars out of the pockets of the public."

That year, a media-reform movement proposed the Wagner-Hatfield bill, which would have set aside a quarter of all radio stations for a variety of non-commercial uses. That bill

was defeated in the Senate by a vote of 42-23 after intense lobbying by the broadcasters. Instead, President Franklin Roosevelt signed the Communications Act of 1934, which allowed the commercial broadcasters, like RCA, to dominate the airwaves. That law made control of a broadcast license dependent on serving "the public interest"—something that has never been seriously defined or enforced. As Robert W. McChesney, author of *Telecommunications, Mass Media, and Democracy*, notes, the debate over how to use a mass medium "has been decidedly 'off-limits' in public discourse" since then.

Earlier this year, President Clinton signed the Telecommunications Act of 1996. Its proponents claimed that the law, which deregulated phone and cable services, would increase competition and result in lower phone and cable rates. In fact, since no real competition exists in most local markets, the law has simply consolidated the power of the corporate giants. By increasing the number of TV and radio stations that one company can own, the law has already resulted in greater media concentration. It greased the wheels for recent media mergers such as Disney-ABC and Westinghouse-CBS-Infinity. Still, one major media issue remains on the table: digital TV.

In the late 1980s, there was a lot of talk about "high-definition TV" (HDTV) that would provide crystal-clear TV pictures. The owners of TV stations—which are mostly the big television networks, other major media corporations, or local rich guys—argued that they should get a new piece of the broadcast spectrum on which to broadcast HDTV. While content would remain the same, people who bought the new digital-compatible TV sets would have a picture of greatly superior quality, akin to the transition from black-and-white to color. The conversion to the new spectrum is likely to begin two years from now, and it will take from 10 to 20 years to complete. Once the TV-watching public had all purchased the new TV sets, the broadcasters would return the current spectrum, which could then be used for other purposes. At that point, current TV sets would become obsolete.

Technological advances—and the prospect of big money—have made a straightforward transition to HDTV unlikely. Digital technology (based on ones and zeros rather than the current analog system) makes it possible to broadcast four to six different regular-quality TV programs on the width of spectrum that one HDTV channel would have used. A portion of the new spectrum could even be used for other purposes, like paging and wireless data transmission.

This presents a number of urgent questions: Who should control the new spectrum? How should it be used? The broadcasters are demanding what is euphemistically called "spectrum flexibility." That scheme would mean that the

broadcasters get the new spectrum for free. In return, all they would have to do is provide one standard-definition digital channel to the public. They would be free to use the remainder of the new spectrum for whatever services they wish—free, that is, to make as much money as they want from the publicly owned airwaves.

Gigi Sohn, deputy director of the Media Access Project, says that the broadcasters “determined that it would be far more lucrative to provide non-HDTV pay TV, paging and data services over the new spectrum.” The broadcaster would probably switch to HDTV only for special events like the Super Bowl. The new digital TV sets would be capable of receiving either the several regular-quality channels or the HDTV channel.

“It’s corporate welfare at its worst,” says Anthony Wright from the Center for Media Education about the prospect of just giving the new spectrum to the broadcasters. Basically, three alternatives exist: 1) an auction, which would give the spectrum to the highest bidders; 2) a comparative hearing, which would award space on the spectrum to those who demonstrated that they could best serve the public interest; or 3) giving the spectrum to the broadcasters, but placing genuine public-interest requirements on them.

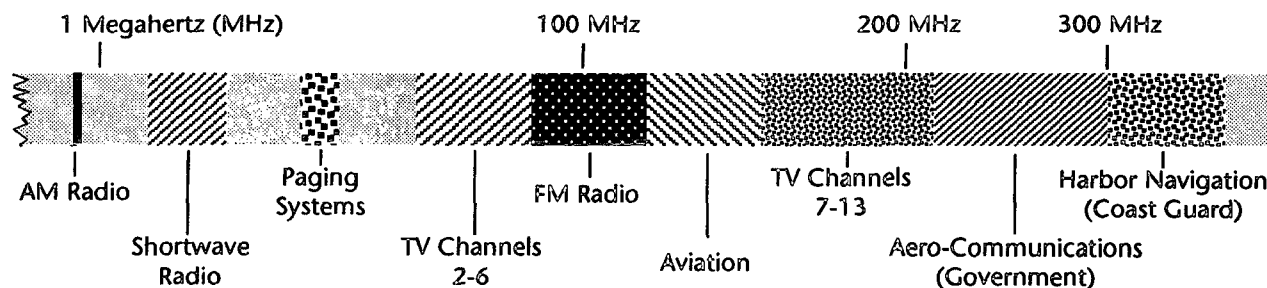
The digital TV issue was sidestepped in the telecommunications legislation after Bob Dole denounced the prospect of handing over the new spectrum to the incumbent broadcasters as “the biggest giveaway of the century.” Dole said he would rather auction off the new spectrum, which could raise anywhere from \$11 billion to \$100 billion. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has already auctioned

According to the law, the new spectrum licenses should be given to those who can best serve the public interest. Given their record, it is doubtful that most of the current broadcasters qualify. The Media Access Project’s Sohn says legal precedent would seem to require that the FCC hold comparative hearings to determine who merits the new licenses. Such a scenario would allow church, educational and civic groups to directly challenge the dominance of the commercial broadcasters.

Saul Shapiro of the FCC Mass Media Bureau says that from an administrative point of view, comparative hearings would be extremely difficult to conduct. He says, however, that it would be “quite simple” to have stringent requirements that a certain percentage of broadcasts be public-interest programming.

Such requirements have a sound legal foundation. The Supreme Court has ruled that “There is nothing in the First Amendment which prevents the Government from requiring a licensee to share his frequency with others ... [since] it is the right of the viewers and listeners, not the right of the broadcasters, which is paramount.”

A variety of non-commercial voices—labor, educational, environmental, consumer, feminist, political, ethnic minority, religious, and other independent producers—could be given a significant portion of the new spectrum, which would be administered by the current broadcasters. This sort of programming would add real diversity to what is shown on TV and would have a profound impact on our culture. If the broadcasters ran pay TV on one or more of the digital channels—or if the political will existed to tax



The Invisible Public Resource: Highlights of how the electromagnetic spectrum is used.

Diagram is not to scale.

off the cellular phone spectrum and other much smaller slivers of spectrum for more than \$10 billion. While an auction would not give space to new non-commercial voices, the money earned from an auction could be used to establish a trust fund to finance independent, non-commercial media.

Nolan Bowie, a lecturer on public policy at Harvard University, questions the wisdom and possibly the constitutionality of an outright auction of the broadcast spectrum. “An auction may mean transferring actual ownership [of the airwaves],” he says. “The public would have to compensate the broadcasters if it wanted the spectrum back.” Bowie proposes a user fee instead.

advertising on the new spectrum—a share of the monies could go toward funding this independent public media.

In January, Newt Gingrich and the new Senate majority leader, Trent Lott, promised to “conduct open hearings and move legislation” on the digital-spectrum issue. On June 19, however, with Dole out of the way, they sent a letter to FCC Chair Reed Hundt telling the commission to give the spectrum to the current broadcasters “as expeditiously as possible.” As Rep. Barney Frank quipped, “I did not realize that I would miss Sen. Dole so quickly.”

“Lott and Gingrich seem to think that free-market theory is good enough for everyone but wealthy broadcasters,” says Sohn. For its part, the Clinton administration seems content with making sure that the broadcasters give back the current spectrum in about 15 years, after most people have bought new digital TVs.

Hundt, who has called the upcoming changes a “true watershed,” seems to presume that the new licenses will simply be turned over to the current analog license holders. In return, the FCC chair is urging the broadcasters to devote 5 percent of the broadcast time on some of their new channels to public-interest programming, by which he means mostly children’s TV and time for political candidates. With his talk about “voluntary ethical behavior,” Hundt is meekly trying to nudge the broadcasters to be more “responsible.” “I probably should be embarrassed for asking so little in return for the public’s property,” he recently confessed.

That’s how central it is to them.”

Good behavior at birth seems to be a habit with new corporate media. Wright notes that cable, when it was in its infancy, made all kinds of promises about giving time to community voices. Now, says Wright, “you have public access in only 15 percent of the country. Instead of diversity, much of cable consists of reruns of programs that are owned by the cable companies.”

The four major broadcast networks are already gearing up to fill the new digital TV slots that they hope to control. After it announced its takeover of ABC last summer, Disney outlined a plan for four “program services” (sports, news, children’s and soap opera) that, Disney

noted, may not be “for distribution on cable.” In other words, Disney will presumably use digital TV to broadcast them. Disney backed away from plans to launch a new all-news network on cable to compete with CNN. That about-face suggests that the company may be planning to launch a news network on the new spectrum.

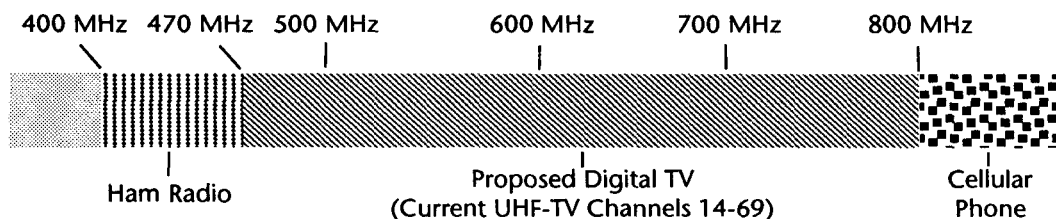
It’s not clear how digital broadcasting will affect the cable industry. For example, will cable operators, which are mandated to carry the one signal now aired by each broadcaster, be compelled to carry several channels? Curiously, the cable industry has not vigorously challenged the broadcasters for control over the new spectrum. “Picking a fight with them [the broadcasters] on advanced [digital] television spectrum was probably not worth the risk of stirring them up on [cable price] dereg,” a cable lobbyist told Multichannel News. The comment suggests that once again the powers collude and the people get screwed.

Despite the importance of digital broadcasting, discussion of the issue has been largely confined to trade magazines and the business section of newspapers. The broadcasters, of course, have hardly raised the subject on their news programs. “They don’t want folks to know they’re being unjustly enriched,” says Harvard University’s Nolan Bowie.

The future of digital TV will likely be decided in the coming months either by Congress, or if it does not act, by the FCC. This is literally a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for reformers to question who controls the public airwaves. If the broadcasters’ attempt to silently grab the new spectrum succeeds, the public may be treated to entire channels of infomercials, Rush Limbaugh clones and pay TV. If that happens, television will expand but still remain a vast wasteland.

Sam Hussein is activist coordinator at the media watch group Fairness & Accuracy In Reporting.

To register your opinion on this matter, contact FCC Chair Reed Hundt by fax (202-418-2801), by e-mail (rhundt@fcc.gov), or by writing him at Room 814, 1919 M Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20554.



Early this year in a meeting with Clinton, the network heads promised to be more responsible about TV violence. Around the same time, Fox’s Rupert Murdoch proposed giving Clinton and Dole TV time just before the election. Says Anthony Wright from the Center for Media Education, “Part of the reason the broadcasters have been responsive to pressure on TV violence, time for political candidates, and even, to a point, children’s TV time is because they’re mindful of how important this spectrum is.

SHERRYL KLEINMAN

opposing ambitions



“Opposing Ambitions is a wonderful book. It reminds us, just as we are in danger of forgetting, that organizations are the collective accomplishments of actors who reside within, and not just ‘structures.’ Kleinman carefully leads us, step by step, into the world of a small organization and shows us how it is a place where inequality, gender, emotion, and privilege are daily negotiated in the enactment of organizational routines. Beautifully written from the perspective of an engaged ethnographer, this book is a superb social psychological analysis of organized life.”

—Nicole Woolsey Biggart, University of California, Davis

Gender and
Identity in
an Alternative
Organization

Paper \$10.95 136 pages Cloth edition available

the university of chicago press

5801 South Ellis Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60637

U. S. FOREIGN POLICY

Admissions and omissions

“W

e at last have in writing what the U.S. government has denied for years—we have been fighting the dirty war in Guatemala,” said Dianna Ortiz, a U.S. nun who was tortured by the Guatemalan military in 1989, and who has since sought to discover who was behind her torture. The president’s advisory Intelligence Oversight Board (IOB) report on human rights cases and the CIA’s role in Guatemala, released on June 28, shows that the CIA knowingly hired paid informants who were involved in assassinations, kidnappings and torture. The report also asserts that U.S. support was “vital” to the Guatemalan intelligence services.

Buried on page 32 of the 67-page study is the revelation that from 1982-91, the School of the Americas and the U.S. Army’s Southern Command used instruction

materials in training Latin American officers, including Guatemalans, that “appeared to condone practices ... such as executions of guerrillas, extortion, physical abuse, coercion, and false imprisonment.” The School of the Americas, under attack for the poor human rights record of its graduates, has long maintained that its instruction is above-board and that notorious graduates are “a few bad apples.”

According to the IOB, virtually the entire report was released to the public—an unusual occurrence due largely to intense public pressure on the Clinton administration. Some 400 CIA and Defense Department documents were declassified and released to the public at the same time, along with additional material from 450 of the 5,000 documents released by the State Department in May.

American lawyer Jennifer Harbury’s search for her husband, Guatemalan guerrilla leader Efraín Bámaca, who vanished March 12, 1992, after a skirmish with the Guatemalan army, led to last year’s revelations of CIA involvement with human rights

violators in that country. By means of repeated protests and hunger strikes, Harbury sought to force the U.S. and Guatemalan governments to release information relating to her husband’s whereabouts. Finally, in March 1995, Rep. Robert Torricelli (D-NJ), a member of the House Select Committee on Intelligence, disclosed that the CIA had known for years that one of its paid assets, Col. Julio Roberto Alpiéz, may have been involved in Bámaca’s killing as well as in the 1990 assassination of Michael DeVine. The connection to the DeVine case was particularly startling, since the U.S. government had suspended military aid to Guatemala because of its failure to fully investigate and prosecute the case against the killers of DeVine, a U.S. citizen who owned an inn in the Guatemalan countryside.

After these allegations became widely publicized, the White House ordered the IOB in March 1995 to conduct a government-wide review of the DeVine and Bámaca cases, as well as any intelligence bearing on the torture, disappearance or death of U.S. citizens in Guatemala since 1984. These cases include the 1984 killing of Peace Corps volunteer Peter Wolfe, the 1985 killings of journalists Griffith Davis and Nicholas Blake, the 1989 stabbing of human rights worker Meredith Larson, the 1990 assault on social worker Josh Zinner, and the 1992 death of archaeologist Peter Tiscione. Many of these victims and family members had joined an informal network called “Coalition Missing” to demand an accounting on their cases.

As the months stretched into a year of waiting for the IOB’s report, Sister Ortiz began a five-week vigil outside the White House in March. She was there all night as well as all but three hours of the day, sleeping fitfully in a sleeping bag,

An Intelligence Oversight Board report confirms some dark truths about the CIA’s involvement in Guatemala.

By Lisa Haugaard

accompanied by members of religious and peace organizations. The vigil, which ended with a week's fast, attracted considerable congressional and public support. One hundred and one members of the House of Representatives signed a letter calling on President Clinton to declassify documents on Guatemala.

Human rights advocates are disappointed by how little the long-awaited report reveals about specific cases. Dianna Ortiz's case is barely touched upon, since the IOB decided to reserve judgment until the Justice Department's separate investigation into her case is concluded. The IOB said it had no information about her claim that a man with an American accent, called Alejandro by her torturers, was present at her torture. According to Ortiz, her torturers appeared to report to Alejandro.

Citing conflicting information from intelligence sources, the report concludes that CIA paid asset Alpírez was not involved in the deaths of Bámaca and DeVine, although it asserts that he was involved in the interrogation of Bámaca and the cover-up of the DeVine case. Little new information is revealed in the cases of other U.S. citizens killed or wounded in Guatemala since 1984.

For Dianna Ortiz and other victims and relatives, the report provides little relief. "I know what few U.S. citizens know," she stated at a July 1 press conference. "I know what it is to be an innocent civilian, and to be accused, interrogated and tortured. I know what it is to have my own government eschew my claims for justice because they cause political problems for a close ally. I know what it is to wait in the dark for torture, and what it is to wait in the dark for the truth. I am still waiting."

The report, however, does provide a remarkable admission by the U.S. government of the extent of American involvement with the Guatemalan military and direct association with individuals implicated in serious misdeeds. While Alpírez is judged not to have participated in the DeVine and Bámaca killings—a judgment their widows still doubt—the report confirms that "several CIA assets were credibly alleged to have ordered, planned or participated in serious human rights violations such as assassination, extrajudicial execution, torture, or kidnapping while they were assets—and that the CIA's Directorate of Operations headquarters was aware at the time of the allegations." Moreover, "a number of the station's liaison contacts—Guatemalan officials with whom the station worked in an official capacity—were also alleged to have been involved in human rights abuses or in covering them up."

With the report, we now have the government's own admission that the United States funded and supported the Guatemalan intelligence service as a partner in pursuit of mutual objectives as late as 1995. Publicly, the U.S. government had stressed a very different set of goals—U.S. support for democracy and human rights. "The funds the CIA provided to the Guatemalan liaison services were vital to the [Guatemalan intelligence service] D-2 and the [presidential guard] Archivos," the report says. "This funding was seen as necessary to make these services more capable partners with the station, particularly in pursuing anti-communist and counternarcotics objectives. The CIA, with the knowledge of ambassadors and other State Department and National Security Council officials, as well as the Congress, continued this

aid after the termination" of U.S. military assistance to Guatemala in 1990.

While the report asserts that CIA funds were not increased to compensate for the cutoff of military aid, the \$1 million to \$3.5 million per year that flowed from FY 1989 to FY 1995 represented a significant sum. Direct military aid in 1990 before the cutoff was only \$9 million.

The report paints a

**Jennifer Harbury holds
a photo of her husband,
disappeared
Guatemalan guerrilla
leader Efraín Bámaca.**



picture of a CIA station that closely identified with its counterparts in the Guatemalan intelligence services and military. The end of the Cold War "had only a limited effect upon the mechanics of how the CIA carried out its business and upon the mind-set of CIA officers dealing with Guatemala," the report says. "Station officers continued to view the communist insurgents—who seemed to threaten a more democratic government—as the primary enemy, and they viewed the Guatemalan government and security services as partners in the fight against this common foe and against new threats such as narcotics and illegal alien smuggling."

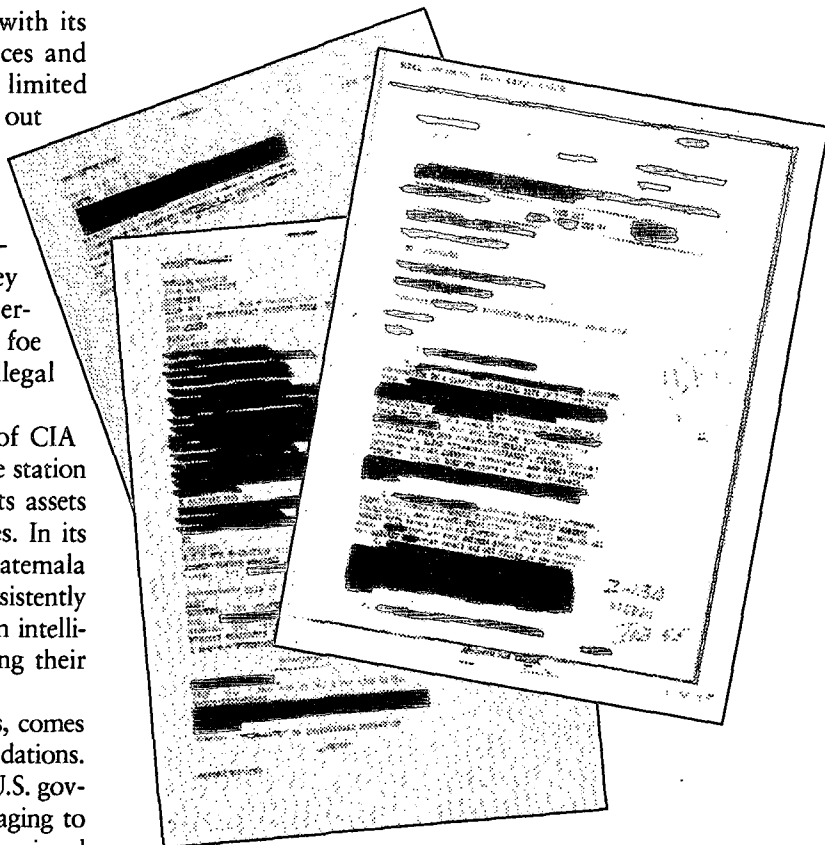
Although U.S. Embassy officials were aware of CIA funding for the Guatemalan intelligence services, the station failed until the end of 1994 to inform them that its assets and contacts were involved in human rights abuses. In its reports to Congress on how CIA programs in Guatemala furthered respect for human rights, the station consistently put a positive spin on the actions of the Guatemalan intelligence services and withheld information concerning their involvement in human rights abuses.

The IOB report, rich in these kinds of revelations, comes to a set of disappointing conclusions and recommendations. It fails to challenge the propriety of the basic policy: U.S. government association with the very forces most damaging to human rights in Guatemala. Instead, it says that occasional association with "unsavory" groups and individuals is necessary to further foreign policy goals. At a July 2 press conference, former CIA officer David MacMichael challenged the relative usefulness of such intelligence sources, and emphasized the damage this does to the United States. "If you lie down with dogs," he pointed out, "you get up with fleas."

The IOB recommends that U.S. intelligence agencies establish clear "guidance" on the recruiting and maintaining of assets with human rights or criminal allegations against them. As the report notes approvingly, the CIA has recently issued such guidance in response to this scandal. But it includes a loophole allowing senior officials to approve use of such assets where national security interests warrant. Carlos Salinas of Amnesty International challenges such a loophole, given its implication that national security interests can outweigh human rights imperatives. "How can anyone involved in human rights violations be considered an 'asset' to the U.S. government?" Salinas asks.

The IOB report itself judges the CIA leniently, since in most cases the agency broke no laws—there are only "guidelines" regarding reporting to Congress. This suggests the importance of establishing laws, not mere guidance, prohibiting the funding of individuals and institutions involved in gross human rights violations. Only the force of law would make lack of compliance a serious matter.

The IOB also admonished the State Department, the National Security Agency and other government agencies for failing to provide relevant information on cases to victims and relatives. In its recommendations, the IOB urges



the State Department to provide information from intelligence reports where needed in briefings to such U.S. citizens.

Unfortunately, the report also comes down hard on administration officials and members of Congress who leak information to the public. This is a "backhanded slap" at Rep. Torricelli, says MacMichael. Without Torricelli's leak, none of this debacle might have come to light.

The IOB report on Guatemala offers an insider's peek at the shady underworld of CIA operatives. It shows that U.S. government support for foreign forces actively engaged in repressing their own people did not end with the Cold War. And as evidence about the U.S. role in Haiti and Honduras suggests, this practice is not limited to Guatemala.

Usa Haugeard is legislative coordinator for the Latin America Working Group.

Have Your Kids Turned Republican? Want To Get Even?

Consider a bequest to In These Times.

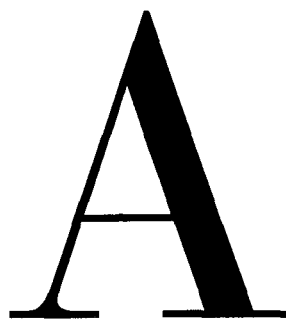
When planning your estate, please include a tax-exempt bequest, trust distribution or other long-term support for the Institute for Public Affairs.

For more information, contact:

James Weinstein, Publisher, In These Times
2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647
312-772-0100, ext. 223

B L A C K A M E R I C A

The hip-hop wars



low-intensity civil war is brewing in inner-city America. While all of the major hip-hop publications—*The Source*, *VIBE*, *RapPages* and *RapSheet*—have devoted considerable ink to the feud, it's a safe bet that most Americans have never heard of it. A deepening conflict pits black youth on the East Coast against their counterparts on the West Coast. The battlefield is rap music.

The bicoastal hostility involves matters of aesthetics—West Coast rap is stylistically distinct from East Coast rap—but the dispute has grown much larger, and considerably more deadly. Hip-hop aficionados on both coasts express a growing sense of frustration that the feud is veering out of control.

Hip-hop was born in New York City in the late

1970s. Originally dance and party oriented, the music was created from a pastiche of percussive break beats appropriated from existing records, while an MC (master of ceremonies, or rapper) rhymed lines in rhythm. By the mid-1980s, the music had taken a turn toward more meaningful subjects and autobiographies of life in the 'hood, and lyrics had begun speaking to the more profound concerns of its black originators.

Meanwhile, the music migrated from New York and insinuated itself into the particular cultures where it settled. Southern Florida produced the Miami-based sound and bawdy doggerel of 2 Live Crew and Luther Campbell. Houston gave birth to the raunchy crime tales of the Geto Boys. But by far the most influential variation on the original rap theme was the so-called "gangsta rap" style out of South-Central Los Angeles, typified by a now-defunct group called N.W.A. (Niggaz With Attitude).

Flagrantly scandalous, N.W.A. focused on life in the underground economy and

the predator mentality needed to survive such a life. The group brought a kind of perverse glamour to the unrelenting grimness of the West Coast ghetto. The misogynistic and fratricidal themes explicit in this subgenre reflected the lives of black youth distorted by the harsh realities of that ghetto, and it resonated strongly within inner-city America. The group's second album, *Efil4zaggin* (Niggaz4Life, backwards), shot up the pop charts. The success of N.W.A. propelled a host of similarly successful imitators.

One of the more noteworthy aspects of N.W.A. was its decision to create a record label to produce music. So while the group postured as a bunch of ghettocentric sociopaths, they actually functioned as an astute collective of black entrepreneurs. Death Row built its success on the aesthetic and business legacy of Andre "Dr. Dre" Young, the label's co-founder and a founder of N.W.A.

In general, West Coast—or more specifically, Los Angeles—rappers are less likely to rely on the recorded samples that are *de rigueur* in New York. They use stronger melodic lines, and their lyrics are less dense—though more profane—than the compressed wordplay of the verbose Easterners.

The record sales of this West Coast rap strain has dwarfed the sales of East Coast rappers. "There's a reason for that," explains Robert "Scoop" Jackson, a Chicago-based editor and contributor to *The Source*. "The West Coast uses familiar musical hooks that are more recognizable and resonant but less adventurous. And hip-hop is inherently adventurous—or it isn't true hip-hop."

The artistic rivalry between East and West Coast rap musicians has escalated into a blood feud.

By Salim Muwakkil

Jackson says that white critics enthusiastically embraced gangsta rap because of its exotic and cinematic qualities and its demobilizing effect on the black community. Many charge that gangsta rap—and its success—is as much a creation of white record executives eager to sell a hard-core view of black urban life as a pure distillation of that life.

The divergence of lifestyles between New York and Los Angeles accounts for important stylistic variations in hip-hop. The bass-heavy throb of a buttery Death Row production, for example, is much more compatible with the low-riding automobile culture of Southern Californians than with the urban frenzy of Walkman-wearing New Yorkers.

For years, those differences seldom surfaced beyond the realm of aesthetic preferences—to each his own. And, as is typical in the world of hip-hop, when those tensions did arise they were expressed in the music; attack and counterattack lyrics are rap staples. However, after the 1995 murders of two men from competing record companies—apparently as a result of the bicoastal feud—black leaders from outside the hip-hop community began to take note and get involved.

Nation of Islam leader Minister Louis Farrakhan attempted to mediate the dispute at a meeting following last October's Million Man March, and last May the National African-American Leadership Summit convened a special hip-hop caucus in Philadelphia to promote unity between the bicoastal rap camps. Black leaders and organizers are beginning to sense the acute urgency of the conflict, and the need to address it before more serious violence erupts.

The broader conflict can be traced back to a specific dispute between two record companies: Los Angeles-based Death Row Records and New York-based Bad Boy Entertainment. The entrepreneurs behind these companies share similar profiles: young black men from inner-city America who parlayed their ghetto-honed skills into music-industry success. Death Row, in business since 1992, is headed by Marion "Suge" Knight Jr., 31; Bad Boy was founded in 1993 by Sean "Puffy" Combs, 26.

Death Row is infamous for promoting the hip-hop subgenre of gangsta rap in mainstream America. The label's first record, *The Chronic*, by "Dr. Dre," debuted at No. 1 on the *Billboard* pop music chart in 1992. The well-produced album typified what has become gangsta rap's signature style: lyrics liberally laced with profanity, detailing life in the underground economy, accompanied by music that borrows heavily from the familiar funk formulas of artists like George Clinton and Roger Troutman.

The widespread popularity of this X-rated music surprised many social critics and provoked an intense response from public moralists. Former Secretary of Education and current guardian of national virtue William Bennett joined forces with civil rights advocate C. DeLores Tucker to protest the mainstreaming of gangsta rap. Tuck-

er argued that the genre specifically demeans African-Americans with its misogyny and vulgar violence, while Bennett condemned it on wider moral grounds. The two focused their protest on Time Warner, owner of Interscope Records, Death Row's distributor. The giant communications conglomerate eventually dumped Interscope.

In the end, Death Row emerged from the controversy unscathed. In fact, the record that precipitated the break with Time Warner, *Dogg Food* by Tha Dogg Pound, also debuted at No. 1 on the pop charts. The black-owned record company is estimated to be worth more than \$100 million. It also has the distinction of being the only gangsta rap-oriented record label to rate a front-page story in the *New York Times Magazine*.

On the East Coast, Bad Boy Entertainment's Combs, too, is a rap wunderkind. He made a name for himself as an 18-year-old promoter in Harlem, and by the age of 22 he was a senior vice president at New York-based Uptown Records, a subsidiary of MCA Records. Two years later, he broke away to form Bad Boy Entertainment, his own record company and talent agency. Bad Boy's debut album, *Ready To Die*, by the Notorious B.I.G., also sold well, though it didn't quite match the success of Death Row's *The Chronic*. Still, Combs has proven to be a savvy talent manager and producer. He is perhaps the youngest mogul in this still young field of hip-hop.

In fact, observers often cite youthful impetuosity as the chief reason for the volatility of relationships within the hip-hop world. "The same reason we have gangs fighting over turf on the South and West Sides of Chicago is almost the same impulse driving this foolish East Coast-vs.-West Coast beef," says Robert "Scoop" Jackson.

Jackson is right on target. Sociologists have fully cataloged the unfortunate but universal tendency of outsider castes (like African-Americans) to amplify their animosities against fellow outsiders. And African-Americans, whose hyphenated identities were forged in a context of white supremacy, have the additional burden of socialized self-hatred. As Cornel West put it in his best-selling 1993 book *Race Matters*, "The fundamental crisis in black America is twofold: too much poverty and too little self-love."

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, a number of hip-hop groups decided to attend to the issue of self-love. East Coast groups like Public Enemy and X-Clan, and West Coast ones like Movement X and The Coup, offered what they called "conscious" lyrics to a receptive audience. But after Dr. Dre's *The Chronic* broke all records and tilted the record industry toward the profitable gangsta genre, conscious lyrics became old hat in the fast-moving rap world.

Meanwhile, the East-West feud continues to escalate. On November 30, 1994, best-selling West Coast rap artist Tupac Shakur was shot four times in a New York City robbery. Shakur later charged he had been set up by people he

Continued on page 36

LABOR

Workers for rent

The booming staff-leasing industry is outsourcing liability for American companies—and leaving workers in the lurch.

By Christopher D. Cook

The Your Staff leasing firm's promotional video opens with an image of Capitol Hill as an announcer laments "endless" workplace regulations inhibiting business profits. "Your costs are going up. Your bottom line is shrinking," the voice intones. "And the government is holding you more accountable, but giving you less authority." Wearied by civil rights, family leave and sexual harassment "headaches," a businessman wipes his brow as his female secretary buries him in labor-law compliance manuals.

Not to worry, though. Your Staff, Inc., a subsidiary of the Kelly Services temporary employment conglomerate, promises an end to employer worries about workers' rights.

Your Staff, a 5,000-employee firm, is part of America's booming staff-leasing industry, which, along with temporary and subcontracted work, is placing millions of workers

in often tenuous jobs with uncertain legal protections. Employers use leasing firms for much the same reason they use temporary employment agencies: It's easier to rent their workers (fees range from 2 to 3 percent of their payroll) than to hire them outright. Unlike temp agencies, however, leasing firms in effect hire away a client company's personnel—even though those workers often remain in the same jobs at the same worksites. The industry appeals mostly to small and mid-sized businesses with fewer than 100 workers. By pooling their clients' workers, large leasing operations—some of which employ more than 50,000 workers for dozens of clients—claim they can offer Fortune 500-quality benefit and insurance packages otherwise unattainable for small companies.

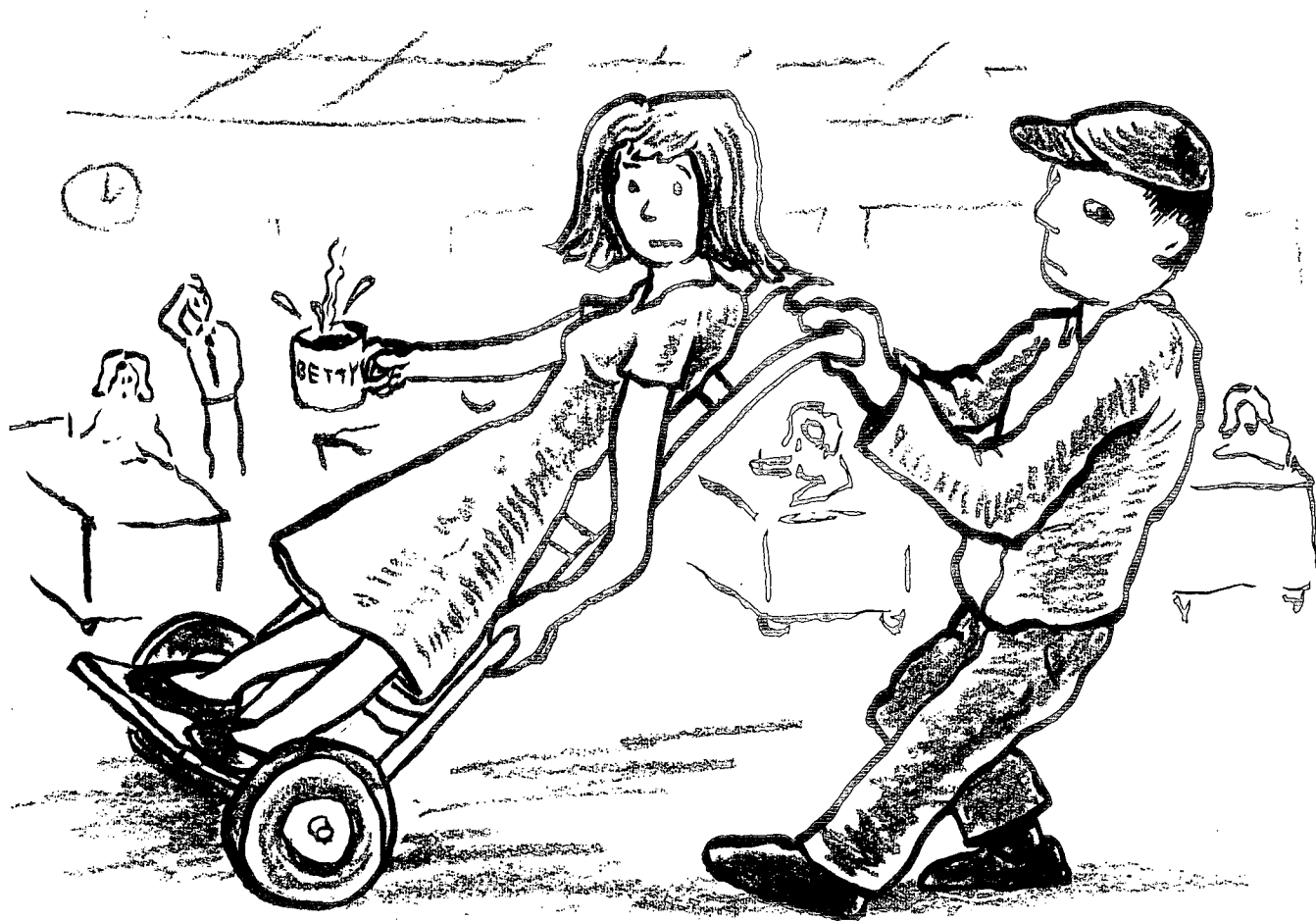
Leasing's primary service to employers, however, is to provide a more trouble-free "contingent" workforce, and the ability to

skirt regulatory obligations and worker lawsuits. As Your Staff's video tells potential clients: "Through prudent management, we provide your company with an extra measure of insulation against damaging litigation and inflated insurance costs. ... Your Staff becomes the employer of record for your employees, while you maintain day-to-day control over directing them."

Industry representatives call employee leasing a "win-win" situation for workers and businesses, but labor advocates warn that it presents employers with new opportunities for abuse and exploitation. Labor attorney Bill Sokol, of Van Bourg, Weinberg, Roger & Rosenfeld in San Francisco, calls employee leasing "one of the most insidious scams in America. It's happening everywhere, it's happening very quickly, and it destroys workers' rights."

The "scam" that Sokol and others describe is one of legal confusion and liability evasion. San Francisco-based workers' rights attorney John True recalls the 1994 case of a graphic designer employed by the Pacific Gas & Electric power company (PG&E). "She came to work one day and they said, 'From this day forward you are not employed by PG&E. You are now working for a leasing company.'" Her job remained the same, True says, "until one day her supervisor, who was a PG&E employee, called her in and fired her."

The firing came without any warning, True says, violating a PG&E personnel policy that includes a guarantee from the company that workers would not be discharged without notice. But without knowing it, True says, the graphic designer and other PG&E staff "lost their security of employment by becoming leased employees. They were no longer under PG&E personnel policies. They were now under the leasing company's policies, which, in fact, say you can be hired and fired at will."



The case, True argues, underscores the main problem of leased employees: "It really blurs the lines of responsibility and authority in the workplace. People who are in the same location, doing the same tasks are working for different firms."

Despite these problems, the leasing business is growing by staggering proportions. In 1984, a mere 98 "professional employment organizations"—or PEOs, as leasing agencies prefer to call themselves—employed 10,000 workers. Today 1,700 firms lease 2 million to 3 million workers. The industry's trade association, the National Association of Professional Employer Organizations (NAPEO), reports an industrywide revenue growth rate of 30 to 40 percent per year. According to analysts at the Bankers Trust Co. in New York, this boom will likely continue through the next five to 10 years.

"Wall Street has suddenly taken a huge interest in the PEO industry," says Milan Yager, NAPEO's executive vice president. "They're saying, 'We can't wait to get our hands on PEO stocks, because there's so much growth.'" The surge has also spawned a wave of mergers and acquisitions, as temporary labor industry giants such as Kelly and Man-

power snatch up staff-leasing subsidiaries like hot cakes, creating new employment-agency empires.

The largely unregulated leasing business (only 13 states require leasing firms to obtain licenses or register their business) has grown so rapidly that even NAPEO has difficulty maintaining up-to-date information. A search for Bureau of Labor Statistics data on leasing was fruitless. "I don't think anybody has any figures, because it's so new," says Jon Sargent, an economist with the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Employment Projections. "Nothing is being collected on it." Even more telling was the response from a California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal-OSHA) spokesman, who admitted, "I've never heard of these companies before."

Leasing's reach extends to "anybody in the workforce today," says Yager. Entire shopping malls are leased from a single PEO, which manages businesses as diverse as hairdressers, clothing outlets and photocopying stores. Construction firms and manufacturers have gotten into leasing, according to Yager, and one PEO in Florida even leases out casual workers and farm laborers. "Name a business, and I'll tell you there's a PEO doing it somewhere in the United

States," says Yager. "Everybody recognizes that this is the wave of the future."

With a common mission of expanding their niche in the economy, the temp and leasing industries boast formidable lobbying clout in Congress and state legislatures. As *NAPEO Report*, the leasing industry newsletter, recently proclaimed, "Government regulators now know that we are here to stay and a force to be reckoned with."

The National Association of Temporary Staffing Services, a temp-industry trade group, has convinced Florida and is pushing eight other states to pass laws denying unemployment-insurance benefits to laid-off temps who seek permanent jobs but fail to request new temporary assignments. The leasing lobby is now following suit, proposing in California that unemployment regulations stipulate that PEO employees cannot receive unemployment benefits unless they contact their agency for reassignment.

The two industries joined hands last year to pass workers' compensation reform in California. The measure, Assembly Bill 914, enables temp and leasing firms to assume sole responsibility for a client company's workers' compensation liabilities, creating another service PEOs can sell to clients. Previously, both leasing firms and their clients were obligated by law to carry workers' comp insurance for each worker. The bill's impact remains unclear. While the measure holds off-site leasing firms responsible for handling workers' compensation claims, OSHA makes the on-site supervisor accountable for workplace safety. This split in responsibilities could create endless legal volleys between leasing firms and their clients, with injured workers stuck in the middle.

Yager maintains that responsible PEOs provide scrupulous managerial and legal expertise, and resolve workplace conflicts equitably. "Our job is not to deny workers' compensation claims," he says. Exemplary leasing firms, he adds, monitor a client's workplace, and bring in specialists who are "trained to spot accidents waiting to happen."

But worker advocates describe a different leasing world. According to attorney Bill Sokol, leasing is a major impediment to workers' labor organizing rights. "Every time a union organizes, we find out that some of the workers are from Manpower and we can't represent them. It means if they have any problems in the workplace, they don't have any recourse. It basically destroys the ability of workers to organize collectively."

Jono Shaffer, organizing coordinator for the building-services division of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), encountered this challenge firsthand. When the SEIU attempted to organize janitors employed by Advance Building Maintenance, the company hired to clean the offices of Toyota headquarters in Torrance, Calif., Advance decided to lease its workers. "In the middle of the organizing campaign, they went to a staff-leasing company," Shaffer says, and "tried to take the position that they were no longer employing the workers, that our

dispute was with the leasing company."

Advance's arrangement with the Staffcorp leasing firm "was nothing more than a smoke screen," Shaffer says. Eventually, by applying public relations pressure on both Staffcorp and Advance, the SEIU forced Advance to settle collective bargaining agreements and numerous wage and hour disputes. The union's strategy also involved publicizing Staffcorp's other client relationships, much like labor's public shaming campaigns against subcontracted sweatshops in the garment industry.

Leasing permits companies to exploit legal ambiguities in order to erode the rights of their employees. "It makes it easier [for companies] to shirk their responsibilities under the law, to pass the buck on to somebody else," Shaffer says. For non-union workers—who make up 90 percent of today's leased workforce—leasing creates numerous barriers for workers pursuing harassment and discrimination claims. "Tracking the legal responsibilities in these arrangements is a tremendously difficult task that takes enormous resources," says Shaffer.

Moreover, proving a case against multiple employers is prohibitively complicated and expensive, according to Cathy Ruckelshaus, staff attorney with the National Employment Law Project in New York City. Ruckelshaus also cites wide-open windows for abuse in pension and family-leave laws. To qualify for Family and Medical Leave Act protection, a worker must log 1,250 hours in one year for a single employer. "[A business] could employ a worker for 11 and a half months, and then switch over to a leasing arrangement to avoid the requirements," Ruckelshaus warns.

According to Shaun O'Brien, staff attorney with the Pension Rights Center in Washington, D.C., leasing enables companies to skirt the Employee Retirement and Income Security Act, which requires that companies provide equal pensions to all employees working more than 1,000 hours per year. A loophole in the law allows unionized firms to establish separate pension plans for non-union employees. "If you have unionized employees and you want to hire more workers," O'Brien says, "you go to a leasing company and you don't have to pay them pension benefits."

Leasing executives reject the notion that their business undermines worker protections. Michael Heffernan, president of StaffAdmin Systems, in Burlingame, Calif., insists, "This is not a trick to screw people." But then he adds, "I should distinguish: NAPEO leasing companies are not out to do that." The distinction is important: NAPEO regulates member leasing firms through the Institute for the Accreditation of PEOs. Only firms that meet the institute's standards for financial security and ethical behavior are admitted. So far only 13 companies have qualified. ◀

Christopher D. Cook is a freelance journalist based in San Francisco.

LABOR

The global labor cop

As corporations gain more power, the International Labor Organization is hard-pressed to defend workers' rights.

By David Moberg

N

early 25 years ago, a group of women approached Ela Bhatt, textile union leader in the Indian state of Gujarat. Unlike union members in local factories, these women worked at home sewing garments or were vendors in the streets. "We are also workers," they told Bhatt. "Why shouldn't there be a union for us?"

Over the years, the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA)—which Bhatt founded in response to their questions—has grown to include 220,000 mostly women workers. Many are among the 30 million Indians, about 8 percent of the workforce, who work at home; others toil in the informal labor sector, where more than 90 percent of Indians work. Reflecting the needs of such workers, SEWA not only bargains with employers and the government but also organizes banks and cooperatives.

Now SEWA and its allies in other countries have finally won international recognition that the often invisible workers who labor at home deserve to be treated like other workers. For example, they deserve to be included in government surveys, assured a minimum wage (now most make less than half their country's minimum), and covered by social-security programs. The International Labor Organization (ILO)—since 1919 a forum for representatives of government, business and labor to define acceptable international labor standards—formally approved an international convention on home work at its annual conference in Geneva in June.

At the same meeting, the ILO called for governments to do more to achieve full employment and prepared to combat more aggressively the most exploitative forms of child labor. The organization also formally reprimanded three governments for serious violations of ILO conventions—Burma for exploiting forced labor, Nigeria for interfering with workers' rights to organize, and Iran

for discrimination against Baha'is and other groups.

Despite these laudable gestures, the ILO has no real power to enforce its decisions. At a time when corporations and investors are gaining more power and new protection of their rights in international trade agreements, worker rights need stronger guarantees, but the ILO is not able to make that happen on its own.

The victory on the home-work standards, which are binding only on countries that ratify the convention, was the second in a series of three controversial new regulations dealing with "contingent" work. Last year, the ILO passed a convention on part-time workers; next year it begins what are certain to be heated discussions of contract work.

Home work, like those other forms of contingent labor, has not disappeared, as many economists once predicted, but is growing in the new global economy. Home production is not only unsophisticated work for local markets; it is also the least regulated, most exploited tip of the far-flung tentacles of multinational corporations, in which people assemble by hand components for global trade in the electronics, auto and garment industries among others. The independent, creative telecommuters of the information age are still a tiny minority among those who work at home.

Labor rights have gained new importance in the new global economy in which fewer restrictions on international trade and investment have given corporations more power. Many workers fear that corporations can use this power to threaten jobs or wages and force workers from rich and poor countries into unfair, mutually ruinous competition, especially if workers in developing countries are hampered from forming unions. The ILO would seem ideal-

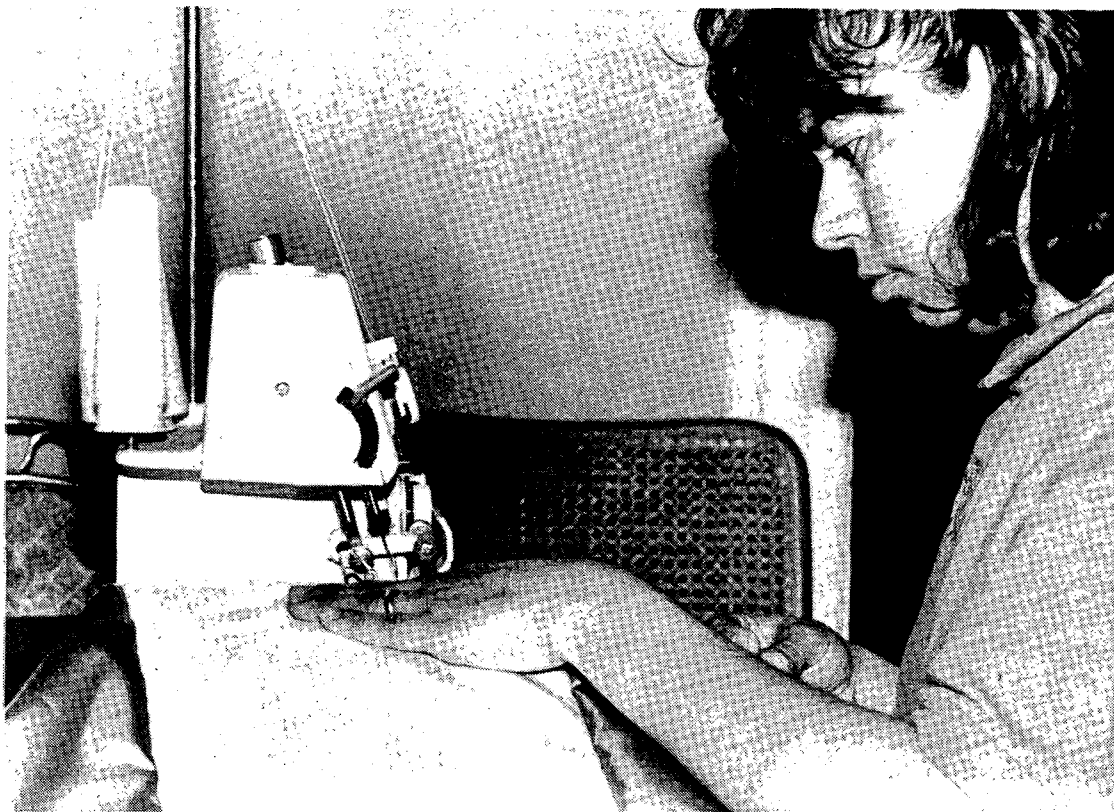
ly placed to be the policeman of these international labor rights.

Yet the ILO does not have the powers needed for that task, especially since employers worldwide are now fighting even harder than in years past against enforceable worker rights. The home-work convention provoked a fight that strained the fragile tripartite relation of government, business and labor that has long been seen as essential to the ILO. Early in the June conference, the employer representatives tried to block consideration of the convention, which can eventually have the force of international law, in favor of a weaker set of recommendations. When they were defeated, the employer bloc—in an unprecedented strong-arm tactic—refused to participate further in the discussion.

The employer combativeness marks a new stage in the convoluted political history of the ILO, which was founded two years after the Russian Revolution “to prevent the revolution of 1917 from becoming the revolutions of 1922 to 1924,” according to Bill Brett, the British union leader who heads the ILO workers’ delegation. “The employers were here for damage limitation from 1919 to 1990.”

In years past, the employers often supported new conventions, partly to head off more radical actions, and partly because the ILO has never had much power to enforce its rules. It investigates violations, issues reports and occasional reprimands, provides technical advice to governments and conducts useful research, but it cannot levy penalties against offending governments.

After World War II, the ILO was riven by Cold War politics. The world’s workers were frequently divided, with U.S. unions often joining their government and employers in fights against Communists, while Communist unions marched to the same tune as their governments and employers, taking potshots at the capitalist powers. “We were fighting the Russians, Cubans and East Europeans over issues not related to the ILO,” recalls Jack Otero, for many years an AFL-CIO delegate to the ILO and now deputy undersecretary of state for international labor affairs. “Every time we came, it was a battle over ideolo-



© SHIA PHOTO, IMPACT VISUALS

gy.” For a few years in the late 1970s, the United States—which is responsible for a quarter of the ILO budget but only recently promised to pay much of the \$135 million that it owes—dropped out in protest over such Cold War tensions as well as over the introduction of Arab-Israeli politics in ILO meetings.

When the Berlin Wall fell, however, everything changed. With the Communist threat gone and the new global capitalism placing them in the driver’s seat, employers no longer felt the need to compromise with labor. They contended that deregulation and flexibility—not more conventions—were necessary because “labor market rigidities,” such as union and governmental rules, stifled economic growth and job creation. The employers posed as the champions of job creation in the Third World, feeding the suspicions of many Third World governments that labor rights were an obstacle to development.

“What you have now is the fall of the Berlin Wall and the growing clarity of the impact of globalization,” says Edward Potter, for many years a leading U.S. business delegate to the ILO. “Employers recognize it’s increasingly difficult to deal with global competition and social regulation at the same time.”

Yet employers still occasionally find the ILO useful for heading off stronger proposals. When faced with calls for a tough “social clause” in the new General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which was signed in 1994, employers argued that the ILO made such action unnecessary.

While the short-term prospects for a social clause are dim, both French President Jacques Chirac and U.S. Labor

Secretary Robert Reich strongly argued at the ILO for a direct link between trade liberalization and enforcement of what are identified as the core labor rights—protection of freedom of association and collective bargaining, and prohibition of forced labor, child labor and discrimination in employment. Reich argued that such linkage was needed for two reasons: to redistribute the benefits of free trade and to protect trade liberalization from protectionist backlash. The dominant view in the major international economic organizations, even among labor representatives, favors freer trade. The ILO as an institution, however, is much more sympathetic than the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund to the idea of managing liberalized trade to protect workers.

However, in late May, even the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the group of major industrialized countries, gave a qualified endorsement of stronger enforcement of labor rights. Implementing core labor standards, an OECD committee report concluded, could “support economic development” and improve economic efficiency. This would, the report said, strengthen “the long-term economic performance of all countries,” yet not hurt the competitiveness of developing countries. In other words, even from a narrow, free-market economic view, enforcing worker rights would do no harm and would probably help workers everywhere.

Plans to establish a tougher regime enforcing labor rights have been slowly moving forward. An ILO working group has been discussing possible links between trade and worker rights, but it had to drop talk of possible sanctions to ensure participation of a bloc led by Asian governments. Though the United States and its few allies on worker-rights issues still want the WTO meeting scheduled for December in Singapore to set up a working party to discuss labor rights, the WTO has done nothing to prepare for such a discussion. Many at the ILO do not want the WTO to pre-empt their role, though the ILO has no meaningful enforcement powers. The WTO, which potentially has meaningful sanctions, wants nothing to do with labor rights, and is happy to leave the matter with the ILO.

The limitations of the ILO are all too readily apparent. The president of this year's conference was the labor minister of the United Arab Emirates, where unions are not permitted. Even renegade nations like Burma get only a diplomatic slap on the wrist and employer representatives object if multinational corporations that invest there, like Texaco and Unocal, are even mentioned in official deliberations. Governments sanctimoniously pass conventions that they never intend to ratify, as the Indian government delegate frankly admitted in the home-work debate. Few new conventions are formally ratified. Although the United States takes the lead in demanding linkage of labor rights and trade, it has ratified only 12 of 175 conventions (putting it in the league of Botswana) and blithely extends most-favored-nation trade status to China.

Despite all the pitfalls and despite the diplomatic

hypocrisy, the ILO remains an important institutional statement of international commitment to basic rights for all workers. It will, however, take far more than the passage of ILO conventions to secure such rights. Workers will have to organize themselves on a global basis. Labor rights and trade liberalization must be linked in a systematic way. Enforceable codes of conduct must be established for multinational corporations. And public campaigns—such as the ongoing fights against sweatshops in Central America or child labor in making soccer balls in Pakistan or rugs in Bhutan—must continue to hold corporations accountable.

The ILO, at least, stands for the idea that workers have a right to organize themselves and governments have a responsibility to intervene in the marketplace to protect workers. Asked if the home-work convention will do any good, Renana Jhabvala, a longtime SEWA leader, said without hesitation: “It's already done some good. One of the main problems of home workers has been their invisibility. Having labor departments, trade unions and employers of every country read about it and make commitments has already made a difference. They'll all go back and realize that there are home workers.” That is a start and, like the ILO itself, a foundation for the long-term effort to secure the human rights of people at work. ▴

David Moberg is researching labor rights and the global economy with support from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

URPE SUMMER CONFERENCE

The Union for Radical Political Economics invites you to attend its annual summer conference for 1996.

From Saturday, August 24 through Tuesday August 27, academics and activists interested in a left-oriented analysis of economic issues and political topics will meet at one of the nicest summer camps in western Connecticut, Camp Chlaquoka in Bantam, Connecticut.

This year's conference theme is *The New Class Warfare* and there will be three plenary sessions: *The Right on the Rampage*, *What's Left of Liberalism*, and *People Under Siege and in Struggle*. Speakers include Jane D'Arista (EPI), Elaine Bernard (Harvard Trade Union Program), Allen Charney (DSA Director), Harry Magdoff (Monthly Review), Mike Albert (Z Magazine), Jerome Scott (Project South), and others.

There will be many other daytime workshop sessions, ranging from formal presentations of academic papers, through panel discussions by activists and interested laypersons. Please contact Dawn Saunders, (dsaunders@moose.uvm.edu) Dept. of Economics 475 Main St., University of Vermont, Burlington, VT 05405 if you would like to present material or organize a session.

A special series of sessions, featuring Sam Bowles (UMass) among others, will discuss the impact of the work of David Gordon (1944-1996), a prominent radical economist and a co-founder of URPE.

Social events will follow each evening session, and camp activities (swimming, hiking, volleyball) are available during the day for kids and adults. Rates include a bunk in a camp cabin (or tent space), and food in the camp mess hall.

For further details, contact the URPE National Office at One Summer Street, Somerville MA 02143, (617) 776-5888
Email: urpe@igc.apc.org

URPE SUMMER CONFERENCE

I N T H E A R T S

Wrestling with history

“You live in a place, you oughta get to know it,” says the first character on the screen in *Lone Star*. This career army officer is out learning the names of the local plants and flowers while his buddy hunts bullets “to turn ‘em into art.” Like most of the people in John Sayles’ movies, these two are not easily classifiable; they have the messiness and oddness of reality about them. Nor are they the main characters in this remarkable ensemble epic about America past and present; they are just two of the many people whose lives and work intersect in the fictional Texas border land of Rio County.

John Sayles’ Lone Star is a remarkable ensemble epic about America past and present.

By Pat Dowell

What they discover in their search for bullets and native flora is a skull, a Masonic ring and a rusted sheriff’s badge, setting in motion a mystery that illuminates at least 40 years of

history—not to mention the very busy political present—of the town of Frontera.

As soon as the movie fluidly enters one of its periodic flashbacks, Sayles makes it clear that *Lone Star* is very much a Western, with the long perspective of this most fundamental of all American film genres. The current sheriff of Rio County, Sam Deeds (Chris Cooper, the weary union organizer in Sayles’ *Matewan*), determines that the skull, the badge and the ring all belonged to the county’s “bribes or bullets” lawman Charley Wade (Kris Kristofferson, as splintery as a rough-sawn plank and sounding like one). Wade disappeared one night in 1957 after a six-gun showdown with his deputy, Buddy Deeds, Sam’s dad. Buddy Deeds went on to be elected sheriff and became an icon of progress to his town, if not to his alienated son. Sam sets out to puncture the inflated myth. Convinced that his father murdered Charley Wade for his powerful job, he doggedly starts hunting for the truth of his father’s life and legend.

On this slender mystery Sayles hangs a portrait of American ethnic clashes and historical struggles. The movie follows Sam and his investigation through several lives and situations that typify our times: arguments over school textbooks, public expenditures, the apportionment of power among competing ethnic groups, and the downsizing of the military. The cast is big and solid, the writing (by Sayles) is often painfully sharp in its observations on American paradox, and the whole thing looks terrific (shot by Stuart Dryburgh, the cinematographer of *The Piano*).

The movie effortlessly glides not only between past and present, but also among more than a dozen different characters whose lives and entangled histories produce little dramatic knots that move the story forward. Sam and his former high school sweetheart, Pilar (the underrated actress Elizabeth Peña), resume their romance, just as the commander of the local army base (Joe Morton) must decide whether to visit his father, the local black bar owner who abandoned the family years ago.

Over the course of the film, Sam Deeds comes to terms with his father. He learns that Buddy Deeds (played briefly with cryptic



Lone Star
Directed by John Sayles

© 1996 CASTLEROCK ENTERTAINMENT



glamour by Matthew McConaughey, the much-hyped star of *A Time to Kill*) presided over Frontera's advancement from lawless, autocratic corruption, with its unpredictable fatalities, to orderly, graft-ridden politics in which competing races—black, white and Latino—found a footing, however inequitable.

Sayles serves up more than a modern Western (though the film is a kind of riposte to mournful nostalgia like *Lonesome Dove*) and more than a portrait of how grubby politics on the local level colors our every urge and twitch. He succeeds in capturing the shape of history as it is revealed in a moment—like a freeze frame.

Sometimes, however, Sayles fails to keep the schematics of his story from showing. He tends to pack in little wads of clunky exposition—convenient little history lessons that nobody would mouth in such circumstances. You can even predict well ahead of time some of the surprise endings to which these interwoven stories are leading. Yet even these shopworn elements become only minor imperfections in Sayles' hands because what he does with them is wise and provocative.

In *City of Hope*, Sayles never found the big picture that gathered all his threads into one grand design. In *Lone Star*,

by contrast, his interrogation of history leads him to advise radical action against the haunting tenacity of the past, which presses its meaning on situations as intimate as sex and as public as a political campaign. Frontera's citizens wrestle not only with the question of who owns history, but also of how to live *with* history, not simply *within* it. What will happen when Sam finds out the truth about his father's past and who killed Charley Wade? Sam's last name, not coincidentally, is Deeds. The name refers to the strongest consistent thread in Sayles' work: his balance of analysis with pragmatism.

Lone Star's final, tentatively triumphant line of dialogue is "Forget the Alamo." The phrase, of course, strikingly inverts that most cherished Anglo-Texan slogan. At the same time, it repudiates the primacy of the past's unfinished business. Sayles addresses it, I think, to the oppressed as well as the oppressors, and to the left as well as the right. In that sense, the line is a recommendation rather than a manifesto. It's advice that, while probably hard for all sides to swallow, may turn *Lone Star* into the John Sayles movie that is most argued about among his natural fans on the left. But I think Sayles knows the secret of the future. It's not the truth that sets Sam Deeds, or you, free. It's what you do with it. ◀

Abuse excuses

By David Futrelle

We live in an age, it is perhaps now commonplace to observe, obsessed with victims and victimhood. Daytime talk shows offer a daily parade of victims—ranging from victims of sexual abuse (and alleged abuse) to those who claim to have been abducted and tortured by aliens. Lawyers plead the “abuse excuse” in attempts to save their clients. White male “patriots” claim to be victimized by affirmative action. Nearly half the states have adopted constitutional amendments said to protect the “rights” of victims of crime, and a national victims’ rights amendment has already been introduced into the Senate.

Yet for all the attention paid to victimhood, our thinking on the subject is terribly crude. Victims are so idealized, and perpetrators so demonized, that we often come a cropper when we are faced—as we often are—with a perpetrator who has himself or herself been victimized. If we claim to truly care about all victims, we surely can’t ignore these stories—but do they convey a kind of pardon on the perpetrator? Do we excuse a criminal because he is poor—assuming (as they sing in *West Side Story*) that he is depraved on account of being deprived? Do we excuse a child abuser because he was himself abused?

Sharon Lamb, to her credit, puts these difficult questions at the heart of *The Trouble with Blame*, an attempt to sort through the complex issues surrounding the notions of victimhood and responsibility, particularly as they relate to the intimate crimes of child abuse and domestic violence.

It is a thoughtful, but often quite troubling book. While Lamb tries valiantly to push the discussion of victimhood beyond the simple polarities of conventional debate, her effort is only partially successful; the book often falls back

upon notions as conventional—and as retrograde—as many of those she condemns.

Lamb’s discussion of the psychology of both abusers and abused is sharp and generally to the point. It is easy enough, Lamb points out, to condemn an abstract villain. But in cases of sexual abuse, perpetrators are all-too-real people—usually men, and often enough relatives of the abused—who have stories of their own. Once you put a face on the abuser, it is harder to blindly condemn him. Nothing excuses the abuse, of course, but there are always extenuating circumstances: poverty, stress, and, all too often, a history of abuse as a child.

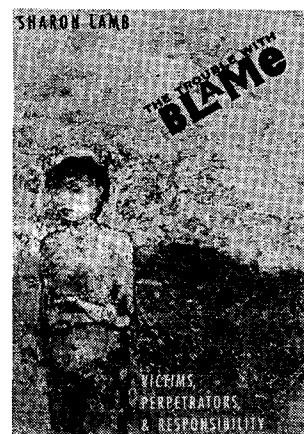
As Lamb points out, abusers are ready to pour out their tales of woe, in some cases making themselves appear (at least to themselves) even more a victim than those they have victimized. “Perpetrators are masters at self-deception, blaming themselves too little,” Lamb writes. Some claim complete innocence; others insist, to themselves and others, that what they did “wasn’t so bad,” or that they have some excuse for their action—they weren’t really responsible.

Though we can’t dismiss the extenuating circumstances, Lamb argues that we nevertheless can’t accept them as an excuse: We must hold perpetrators responsible, and steadfastly oppose their attempts to pass the buck. Indeed, she suggests that we don’t hold perpetrators of abuse responsible enough for the damage they do.

While perpetrators tend to make too many excuses, victims tend to saddle themselves with too much self-blame—either taking the abuser’s excuses at face value, or assuming that somehow they invited (or even deserved) the abuse. Such impulses in many ways simply perpetuate the abuse: After being tormented by another, the victim torments herself; in some cases, victims do actual physical violence to themselves.

What makes the issue so maddeningly complex, Lamb suggests, is that some of the victim’s self-blame is not entirely misguided. No woman deserves abuse, and no woman should blame herself for the behavior of another. But, Lamb notes, an abused woman is probably right to ask herself, “What is it about me that makes men do this to me?” Answering such a question may well enable her to keep from returning to her abuser—to overcome what some have called an “addiction to trauma.”

And it is as important for



The Trouble with Blame: Victims, Perpetrators, and Responsibility

By Sharon Lamb

Harvard University Press
244 pp., \$22.95

victims to take responsibility for their lives as it is for victimizers to accept responsibility for their actions. Responsibility, Lamb points out, is not a zero-sum game; by insisting that victims take more responsibility for their lives, we are not thereby absolving abusers of their responsibilities.

In short, Lamb suggests that we apply the same standards to both abusers and abused, neither sanctifying the victim nor demonizing the abuser, but treating both as human beings who can and should take responsibility for their lives—and who will benefit from doing so. As Lamb persuasively argues, “If there is an excuse that we won’t allow a perpetrator to make in his attempt to disclaim responsibility for his actions, then we surely can’t allow a victim to use the same excuse to disclaim responsibility for her actions.”

Ultimately Lamb contends that we need to see both victims and perpetrators as the complicated, and flawed, people that they are, not as pawns in a political game of pass-the-blame. “When we blame perpetrators too little,” she writes, “the self-blame of victims is supported and encouraged; when we blame victims too much, perpetrators need not admit responsibility. When we blame perpetrators too much, they lose the much-needed support to help them in their process of rebuilding their character, reforming, and making reparations. When we blame victims too little, we make them too small as individuals and reinforce the passivity that was inherent in the experience of victimization.”

Indeed, a more realistic conception of victimhood will do real victims more good than one that exaggerates their “innocence.” By urging victims not to blame themselves, Lamb writes, the public “creates a category of victimhood that requires blamelessness, leaving real victims with a private sense of guilt that they dare not talk about and that may prevent them from carrying on the task of living.”

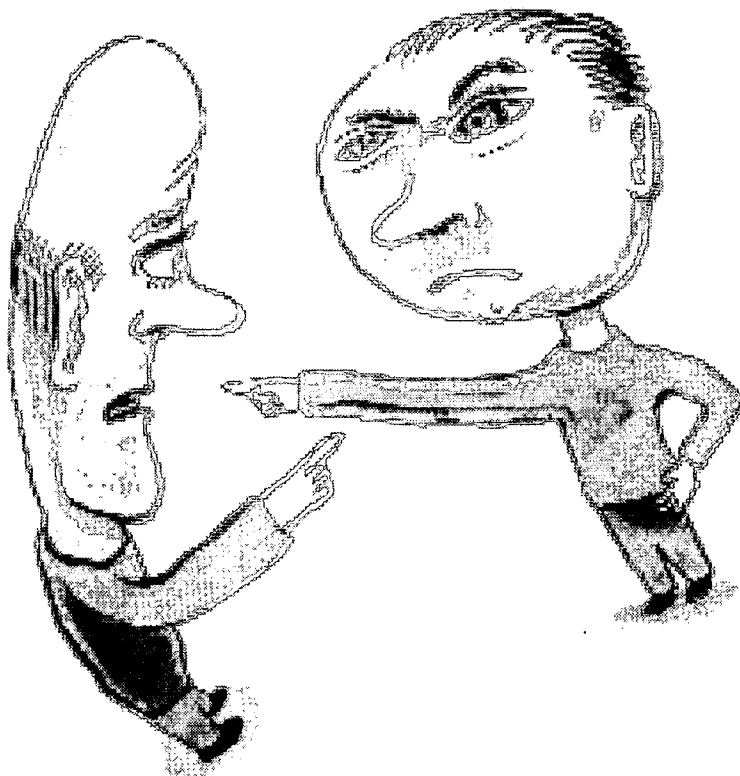
Lamb’s portrait of victims and victimhood is essentially a psychological one. This is both the book’s central strength and its central weakness. While Lamb is (for the most part) able to avoid the reductionist political sloganeering that often accompanies the discussion of victimhood, she is unable to effectively place her psychological arguments in a broader political context.

Her chapter on “The making of perpetrator and victims,” for example, almost completely disregards political and social forces, particularly the inequalities of race and class, that so complicate the issues of victimhood.

And Lamb’s vision of gender inequality is, to say the least, simplistic. In Lamb’s view of the world, the archetypal perpetrator is male and the archetypal victim, female; indeed, a “note on terminology” at the beginning of the

book explains that Lamb has “used the male pronoun for perpetrators and the female pronoun for victims.”

This is, at least according to most statistics, a rough approximation of the truth: Most perpetrators are indeed male, and victims are all too often female. But abuse is too complex, and its causes and effects too varied, to fall easily



© 1996 KIT BOYCE

into such simple categories. And though Lamb insists she doesn’t intend to slight male victims of abuse, there’s little room for them in her gendered world.

Lamb writes of men and women almost as though they came from separate planets. Women and children (the two groups are frequently equated in Lamb’s account) are easily incapacitated by abuse, trapped by irrational bonds to their tormentors; by contrast, men share a common sense of “entitlement” to female bodies. But such imperious generalizations beg more questions than they answer. Are all women such fragile flowers? Are all men really, as Lamb suggests at one point, “potential perpetrators”? Don’t such notions in many ways replicate the ancient prejudices of the most patriarchal of thinkers?

It’s a strange paradox: After insisting that victims need to take responsibility for their lives, Lamb falls back into precisely the kind of paleo-feminist thinking that most insistently denies them this responsibility. After gently pushing the victim off her pedestal, Lamb erects another pedestal for her to stand upon. In the process, she derides as “backlash supporters” those who challenge her particular brand of feminism. Indeed, at one point Lamb suggests that the work of “backlash” writers “aids and abets perpetrators.” It’s quite

an accusation—equating intellectual disagreement with criminality—which is perhaps why Lamb leaves most of these writers unnamed.

The one writer she does explicitly attack is Katie Roiphe, author of the controversial *The Morning After*, an indictment of what Roiphe called the “date rape hysteria” said to be afflicting our universities. (Lamb notes, patronizingly, that Roiphe’s “youthful exhortations” cause her to “worry about [Roiphe], as a mother would worry about a daughter staying out at night.”) Lamb’s lambasting of Roiphe is—to say the least—strange, especially since some of Roiphe’s ideas are in fact not very different than hers: Both writers challenge the idealization of victims and victimhood. Both want women to take more responsibility for their lives.

Lamb’s contradictions suggest how difficult it is to combine psychology and politics in any straightforward way. Perhaps, in this case, it is wiser not to try to combine them at all. The legal system is designed—at least in theory—to punish the guilty and protect the innocent; it is not designed to heal the wounds caused by violence or abuse.

“Justice is not a form of therapy,” social critic Wendy Kaminer has cogently argued. “[W]hat is helpful to a particular victim, or defendant, is not necessarily just and what is just is not necessarily therapeutic.” A victim may feel a momentary sense of relief when a perpetrator is put behind bars, but no amount of punishment can erase the damage the perpetrator has done. That is the job of therapy, not politics. ◀

Continued from page 25

thought were his friends. He named names—citing, among others, Randy “Stretch” Walker, a producer employed by Bad Boy—and he intimated that his would-be assassins were motivated by regional animosities. On November 30, 1995, exactly one year after Shakur’s shooting, Walker was murdered execution-style a few blocks from his Queens, N.Y. home. Shakur has since signed with Death Row and done his best to escalate East-West tensions with numerous statements designed to disrespect East Coast artists.

At a party in Atlanta last October, which the heads of Death Row and Bad Boy attended, a member of the Bad Boy entourage shot and killed an employee of Death Row.

During a New York City video shoot, assailants fired on the trailer of Tha Dogg Pound, the Death Row group, in a drive-by shooting. Luckily no one was injured. Witnesses claimed the gunmen shouted anti-West Coast slogans before speeding away.

Reflecting how the bicoastal conflict is heating up, touring rap artists say they are encountering more regional animosity. An article on the subject in the February 1996 *VIBE* quotes Death Row’s Dr. Dre as saying, “If it keeps going this way, pretty soon niggaz from the East Coast ain’t gonna be able to come out here and be safe. And vice versa.”

Commenting that “the rumblings, innuendo and outright flame-fanning has gone on long enough,” *The Source* sent writer Selwyn Seyfu Hinds to talk to O’Shea “Ice Cube” Jackson, a thirtysomething elder statesman who was a former member of N.W.A. The magazine hoped that he would

help cool the hostilities. No such luck. Instead of chilling things out, Ice Cube brought heat.

He railed against the New York chauvinism of East Coast rappers. “I feel that us on the West Coast feel like our backs are against the wall,” Ice Cube says. “We feel like we’ve done so much for hip-hop, and we take so much abuse. And it’s to the point where the groups out here are just like, ‘Yo, it’s time for this shit to be over. Whatever is going to go down is going to go down.’”

The Philadelphia summit failed to resolve the issue because Bad Boy Entertainment’s Combs didn’t show, but efforts to bring peace to this hip-hop civil war are continuing. As tensions simmer, observers warn that things may soon get out of hand. The feud once again makes clear just how closely the musical form called hip-hop reflects the dreams and ambitions—as well as the fears and contradictions—of its young, black creators. ◀

C.L.R. JAMES | A Political Biography by KENT WORCESTER

A fascinating, immensely readable biography of one of the most important radical intellectuals of the twentieth century.

“...Worcester has written a sensitive, multi-faceted, intellectual biography of one of this century’s most creative thinkers.” — BRIDGET BRERETON, *The University of the West Indies*

“...Worcester’s work is the single best study of James currently available.” — MANNING MARABLE, *Columbia University*

“...Worcester has provided an eminently readable biography but has also given James his full due as a political, social, and literary theorist. This is a remarkable achievement.” — STANLEY ARONOWITZ

“...a careful, thorough piece of scholarship, utilizing primary sources that had been neglected by other James scholars.” — *THE NATION*

311 pages
\$19.95 paperback
0-7914-2752-8

at bookstores
or call 1-800-666-2211

SUNY Press
c/o CUP Services
PO Box 6525
Ithaca, NY 14851

<http://www.sunypress.edu>
gopher://sunypress.edu

**State University of
New York Press**

CLASSIFIEDS

▶ HELP WANTED

ORGANIZER. Full-time for community-based solidarity/Salvadoran sister city group linking economic justice issues across borders. Desired: Organizing experience, fundraising, computer skills. Résumé by July 29 to Peace through InterAmerican Community Action (PICA) c/o Karen Volckhausen, PO Box 2 RR 3760 E. Holden, ME 04429. Phone: (207) 667-9212.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Institute for Southern Studies provides research and support to poor and working communities, publishes *Southern Exposure*. Seeking director to build strategic focus, oversee programs, small staff, fundraising, finances.

NICARAGUA ELECTIONS DELEGATION
Observe and evaluate historic presidential elections and meet political parties, farm and labor organizations. October 14 - 23.
GLOBAL EXCHANGE 800-497-1994

JEWISH CURRENTS

July-August, 1996 Issue
"For Peace Process—vs. Netanyahu," editorial; "From Jerusalem on Israeli Elections," Lori Ginzberg and Joel Steiker; "Despite Pain, Peace Will Prevail," Maher Abdelgader; "A Pro-Israel, Pro-Peace Perspective," Ralph Seliger.

Single issue: \$3 (USA).
Subscription: \$30 yearly (USA).

JEWISH CURRENTS
Dept. T, Suite 601,
22 E. 17 St., New York, NY 10003.

Requires commitment to social justice and diversity, analysis of issues affecting working Southerners, communication, fund-raising, financial, and management skills. Low 30s, health, dental. Affirmative action employer. Send résumé and letter to PO Box 531, Durham, NC or call 919-419-8311, ext 25.

COMMUNITY JOBS: The Employment Newspaper for the Non-Profit Sector. Join over 50,000 job-seekers in reading a unique monthly publication containing more than 200 new job listings (in Environment, Arts, International, Health, Youth, Civil Rights, Housing, Human Services, etc.). Featuring informative articles, book reviews, resource lists,

profiles of nonprofit organizations and the people who found them. Contact: Community Jobs, 1001 Connecticut Ave. NW, Ste. 838, Wash., DC 20036.

INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES: Peace Brigades International protects nonviolent movements in Guatemala, Sri Lanka, Haiti, Colombia, the Balkans, and with indigenous people in North America. Sept. 15-22 training. Call: 510-540-0749.

\$1000s POSSIBLE TYPING. Part Time. At Home. Toll Free 1-800-898-9778, Ext. T-3077 for listings.

\$1000s POSSIBLE READING BOOKS.

GOOD VIBRATIONS
Friendly, informative catalogs of sex toys, books & videos, \$4.
1210 Valencia #117
San Francisco, CA 94110

Socialist

A democratic socialist view of life and politics from the Socialist Party USA.
\$9.00 per year (6 issues).

516 W. 25th St. #404, NY, NY 10001
(212) 691-0776

Thomas Paine VIDEOCASSETTE

This educational, "very informative," and "fascinating" 40-minute video, written and hosted by Thomas Paine Scholar Carl Shapiro, was telecast via cable TV throughout northern New Jersey in the spring of 1992. In this original, unedited video, the essential meaning of Paine's extraordinary career as revolutionary writer and foremost exponent of democratic principles is recounted in a presentation "sure in its content" and clear in its delivery. A discussion of little-known but significant incidents in Paine's life adds immeasurably to this memorable video.

VHS cassette, \$25.00 ppd. (USA)
INDEPENDENT PUBLICATIONS, P.O. BOX 102, RIDGEFIELD, NJ 07657

Part Time. At Home. Toll Free 1-800-898-9778, Ext. R-3077 for listings.

▶ PUBLICATIONS

1996: PATRICK BUCHANAN said: "We're on the verge of ... taking back our country ... [W]hen we get there, my friends, we will be obedient to one sovereign in America ... the sovereign of God himself." (*The Nation*, 3/11/96.) 2001: Political forces agreeing with those thoughts took power. 2011: They created an apartheid state. 2023: Following the Second Civil War, constitutional democracy was restored. *The 15% Solution: A Political History of American Fascism, 2001-2022*, Johnathan Westminster, Thomas Jefferson Press, 2048, \$29.95 paper, \$37.95 hard-cover. In bookstores (distributor, Library Research Associates, Monroe, NY), or call 1-800-882-7987.

DEBUNK BEN FRANKLIN! 300-page socialist analysis. Send large SASE for information: Basic Choices, PO Box 259598, Madison, WI 53725-9598.

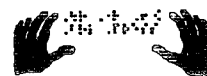
DO YOU HAVE spanking fantasies? We do—hundreds—and ours are for sale. Romantic, erotic, disciplinary, wherever the muse wanders. For a 24-page catalogue send \$3.00 to CF Publications, Box 706TT, E. Setauket, NY.

New Political Science

Radical scholarship on today's political issues.
Special price! \$25 for 4 issues

Gvt Dpt., Suffolk Univ.,
Boston, MA 02108
617-573-8126

Our Right To Know Braille Press, Inc.



For blind and print-handicapped persons, FII—FREEDOM IDEAS INTERNATIONAL, a quarterly review of minority and independent publications, includes selected articles from IN THESE TIMES. Produced by Our Right to Know Braille Press, Inc., on 4-track 15/16 ips cassette tape.

A 4-issue subscription costs \$5.

**Our Right to Know
Braille Press, Inc.**
640 Bayside, Detroit, MI 48217
(313) 842-1804

► FOR RENT

CHICAGO-SMALL OFFICE SPACE available for business or personal use. \$150/month includes utilities. Use of office equipment negotiable. Call Jim Weinstein at 312-772-0100, ext. 223.

► FOREIGN LANGUAGES

CENTRO MAYA: women/indigenous owned co-op in beautiful Quetzaltenango, Guatemala. 5 hours week-day individual Spanish instruction, complete R&B, \$120/week. Contact: 3314 Sherwood, Wichita Falls, TX 76308. (817) 696-3319. e-mail: centromaya@aol.com.

SPANISH, CULTURE, TOURS, at ESCUELA AZTECA. Summer in beautiful Cuernavaca. \$220 two weeks. Intensive grammar all levels. Weekend tours. Minicourses with Ross Gandy, Ph.D. (Mexico: Reform or Revolution?). Live with Mexican family. For brochure: call (52-73)-15-24-69. Address: ESCUELA AZTECA, Apdo. Postal 76-005; 04201 Mexico, D.F.

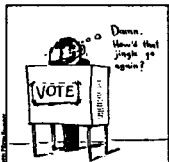
► PERSONALS

RUSSIA, W. EUROPE, SO. AMERICA, AUSTRALIA, etc.: Worldwide introductions. Sincere, professional men and women. Free info. Scanna Int'l. (since 1980), PO Box 4-ITT, Pittsford, NY 14534. 1-800-677-3170 (24 hr.).

EROTIC, INTELLIGENT, imaginative conversation—Discreet, personal and pleasurable. Please inquire (617) 661-3849.

OPEN RELATIONSHIPS, group marriage, intimate friendship. Interested? Discreetly contact others. SASE for details. Current issue \$4. Touchpoint, PO Box 408-TT3, Chloride, AZ 86431.

PETER HANNAN
VOTE T-SHIRT



110% COTTON! LARGE ONLY! SEND \$10 TO: PETER HANNAN VOTE SHIRT C/O IN THESE TIMES 2040 N. MILWAUKEE, CHICAGO, IL 60647

HETEROSEXUAL CROSSDRESSERS join a social support group. TRI ESS Dept. 1, POB 194, Tulare, CA 93275. HOTLINE (209) 688-9246.

► HEALTH

ABORTING OURSELVES SAFELY! Bibliography of information on Menstrual Extraction, herbal & vitamin abortions, etc. \$5 & SASE to: AUTONOMY, Box 591, Chilmark, MA 02535

► MISCELLANEOUS

ABOLISH ZOO PRISONS. No Animals in carnivals, circuses. Contact PO Box 428, Watertown, NY 13601-

0428 or (315) 782-1858.

GOV'T FORECLOSED homes for pennies on \$1. Delinquent Tax, Repo's, REO's. Your Area. Toll Free 1-800-898-9778, Ext. H-3077 for current listings.

SEIZED CARS from \$175. Porsches, Cadillacs, Chevys, BMWs, Corvettes. Also Jeeps, 4WDs. Your Area. Toll Free 1-800-898-9778, Ext. A-3077 for current listings.

Concerned Singles Newsletter

Nationwide All ages • Since 1984

links compatible singles who care about peace, social justice, gender equity, racism, and the environment.

FREE SAMPLE: Box 555-IT Stockbridge MA 01262 or (800) 370-5040

CHIAPAS

CHALLENGING HISTORY

INDIGENOUS VIEWPOINTS ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN SOUTHERN MEXICO

SPECIAL EDITION OF AKWEKON JOURNAL .

SINGLE ISSUE: \$14.00 PPD. ONE-YEAR SUBSCRIPTION: \$18.00 (U.S.) CHECK/VISA/MC to: 300-IT CALDWELL HALL, CORNELL UNIVERSITY, ITHACA, NY 14853

Just Good Food

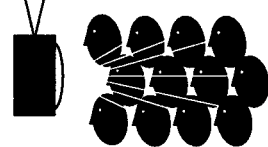
The Newsletter for people who love food, but have a life.

To subscribe for a year (12 issues) send a check for \$24* to:

Just Good Food
1955 W. Cornelia
Chicago, IL 60657-1021

*Guarantee: If you're not satisfied,

Great Gift For Addicted Friends



idiot nation

black on white heavyweight cotton. L & XL only. Send \$11 + \$3 s/h to Volkswear, Box 11933, Milwaukee, WI 53211 Send \$1 for catalog or view at www.execpc.com/~volkswr

DEFRAUDING AMERICA

Explosive 650 pgs. Encyclopedia of CIA & other gov't corruption. Author: former federal investigator, aided by CIA spooks. Excellent book reviews. A classic. \$28.

UNFRIENDLY SKIES

History of air disasters & corruption. Written by former federal investigator. Another classic. Excellent reviews. 605 pages. \$28.

DISAVOW

Inside a CIA proprietary in Hawaii, mechanics of operations, coverups, funding, \$25.50. All by Rodney Stich. 800-247-7389; or POB 5, Alamo, CA 94507

IN THESE TIMES

classified ads work like your own sales force.

| Word Rates: | Display Inch Rates: |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 95¢ per word / 1-2 issues | \$30 per inch / 1-2 issues |
| 85¢ per word / 3-5 issues | \$28 per inch / 3-5 issues |
| 80¢ per word / 6-9 issues | \$26 per inch / 6-9 issues |
| 75¢ per word / 10-19 issues | \$24 per inch / 10-19 issues |
| 65¢ per word / 20 + issues | \$22 per inch / 20 + issues |

Classified ads must be prepaid. Send your copy, coupon, and payment to:
IN THESE TIMES, Classified Ads, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647.

Enclosed is my check for \$_____ for _____ week(s).

Please indicate desired heading _____

Advertiser _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

ART SALE



♦ Most illustrations, cartoons and collages appearing in In These Times are available for reprint.

♦ Many originals are available for purchase.

♦ In These Times illustrators are available for hire on a freelance basis. Call (312)772-0100 X245





Continued from page 40

millions of dollars in retail sales. Marketing plans included not only the familiar array of postcards, dolls, pins and other ephemera, but a television cartoon series, appearances at county fairs, shopping malls and theme parks, and placement as a product in films and TV shows.

Whether Atlantans appreciate it or not, Izzy is a surprisingly appropriate symbol for their city, as well as for ACOG. Both the city and the slug are striving, identity-challenged adolescents seeking to make a place for themselves amid more established peers. In many respects, Atlanta's identity as a place is as ambiguous as its Olympic mascot. In 1993, a nationwide poll revealed that the city was more known for the exploits of the Atlanta Braves baseball team than anything else, even *Gone With the Wind*. Indeed, one-fifth of survey respondents were unable to think of anything characteristic of the city at all. A recent poll revealed that a majority of Americans linked Atlanta with the Olympics, had positive feelings toward both, but still possessed a very uncertain sense of the city's identity. Much like the mascot, Atlanta's defining feature may well be its ability to morph into a generic image that best responds to the demands of the marketplace.

Atlanta's continuing poor name recognition is, in part, a consequence of well-financed efforts by generations of entrepreneurs, hucksters and assorted visionary dreamers to craft a positive, appealing and upbeat image for the city. As early as the 1920s, the Chamber of Commerce had funded an unprecedented effort to persuade national investors of Atlanta's virtues, chief among which was the city's reserve army of intelligent, yet docile and non-unionized Anglo-Saxon labor. In the '60s, the Chamber renewed its marketing efforts with a new message, advertising Atlanta as a "major league" city that was "too busy to hate." In contrast to their confreres in Birmingham, Little Rock or, for that matter, the rest of Georgia, Atlanta's businessmen realized that massive resistance to desegregation was bad for business. Since the '70s, Atlanta's biracial governing coalition has trumpeted the city as a world capital of not only civil but human rights. However, in the official mythology that has been spun about the city, Atlanta is first and foremost a forward-looking technopolis with an alluring business climate. This generic, technofuture-oriented image deflects attention from the city's less than completely progressive past, which includes a stint as the Imperial Capital of the Ku Klux Klan.

Atlanta's boosters have proven to be very good salesmen. Over the last three decades, the 20-county metropolitan area has consistently been among the nation's leaders in population and job growth. However, the benefits of this growth have gone largely to the majority-white suburban periphery. Indeed, the central city of Atlanta is one of the poorest and most violent urban areas in the United States. Inside the ramparts of the "Perimeter" Highway, the majority-black central city has been ravaged by the not-so-creative destruction unleashed by urban renewal, malign neglect and the

exodus of corporate capital and the city's biracial middle class. Atlanta's urban core, where most Olympic venues are located, is pockmarked by a number of discrete zones of privilege scattered over a landscape of despair.

Back in 1990, when Atlanta was awarded the Olympics, many hoped that the Games would provide the impetus for rebuilding the city's physical and social infrastructure, much like what was then taking place in Barcelona in preparation for the 1992 Summer Games. Sadly, this dream has gone unrealized. ACOG has, with a few exceptions, focused its energies on the venues themselves, leaving the more difficult task of "outside the fence" redevelopment to the city and state governments. Lacking the money and the will, government has been relegated to a supporting role next to the city's corporate establishment, which has concentrated its efforts on creating an alluring, user-friendly theme park that sells the image of Atlanta as a world-class city to Olympic visitors and viewers. Beneath the brightly colored veneer of pedestrian corridors and a handful of new quasi-public, highly corporatized spaces, however, little has changed. Indeed, much as in the case of Whatizit, when faced with a product of questionable appeal, Atlanta's elites have chosen a superficial makeover over meaningful, substantive change. ▲

Charles Rutheliser is the author of *Imagineering Atlanta: The Politics of Place in the City of Dreams* (Verso). He is the director of the graduate program in applied anthropology at Georgia State University.



Subscribe to ITT!

☐ **NEW SUBSCRIPTION.** You'll receive your first issue in 4-6 weeks. Please check price and terms below. AST1

☐ **RENEW NOW.** We'll extend your current subscription for as long as you like. This

saves you worries about expiring and helps us save money and the environment by not sending renewal notices and bills. ART1

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

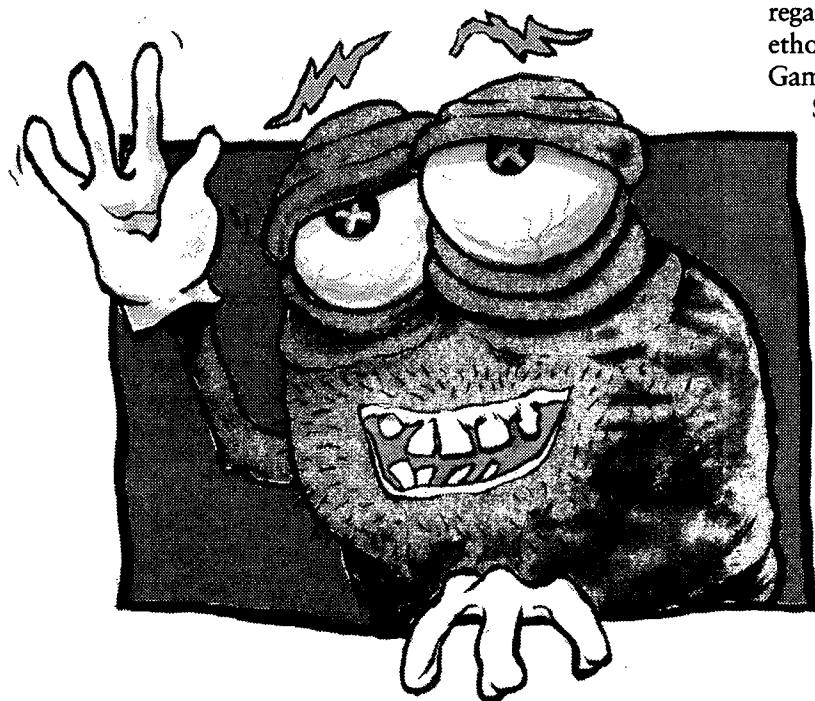
PRICES & TERMS

- ☐ One year, 26 issues of In These Times: \$36.95
☐ Six months, 13 issues: \$19.95 ☐ Institutional, one year: \$59.00
☐ Payment enclosed ☐ Bill me

Canadian orders, add: \$27.50 (one year), \$13.50 (six months) postage.
 All other foreign orders add: \$41.00 (one year), \$20.50 (six months).

Mail to: IN THESE TIMES Customer Service, 308 Hitt St., Mt. Morris, IL 61054
 For credit card orders call: 1-800-827-0270

I N T H E E N D



Whatizit's Atlanta

By Charles Rutheiser

On July 19, the world's attention will turn to Atlanta to watch the opening ceremonies of the Centennial Olympic Games. Heralded by the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG) as the largest peacetime event in history—only wars are bigger, one ACOG minion quipped—the XXVth Olympiad is expected to attract more than 2 million visitors and draw over 2 billion TV viewers. In addition to being a celebration of sport, the Olympics constitute a \$1.7 billion advertisement for Atlanta. For the leaders of ACOG and the city's civic-business elite, the Olympics provide compelling proof of their claim that Atlanta is truly “the world's next great international city,” a world-class cosmopolis on a par with New York, London and Paris. ACOG czar Billy Payne may be the only person who genuinely believes this promotional bluster. Most international visitors, for example, view Atlanta as a somewhat provincial, quintessentially American metropolis. In fact, despite all the exertions of the advertiser's art, Atlanta still lacks a clearly defined identity.

The ambiguity of Atlanta's identity is typified in its offi-

cial Olympic mascot, the bug-eyed, aqua-toned entity called “Izzy.” Unlike past Olympic mascots, like Los Angeles' Sam the Eagle or Moscow's Mischa the Bear, Izzy was designed to be a hotly marketed commodity in and of itself. In this regard, Izzy eloquently exemplifies the intensely commercial ethos that permeates virtually every aspect of the 1996 Games. There is hardly a product category in the United States that lacks an official Olympic sponsor.

Originally known by the all too appropriate moniker of “Whatizit,” the blue blob debuted during the closing ceremonies of the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, where it soon elicited a global chorus of scathing ridicule. Whatizit was an easy and compelling target for sharp-tongued media savants. Cartoonist Matt Groening, creator of *The Simpsons*, America's favorite dysfunctional cartoon family, likened it to “a bad marriage of the Pillsbury Doughboy and the ugliest California Raisin.” Other popular identifications included a fetus, a sperm, a slug and a mutant smurf. Yet, according to its proud parents at ACOG, the creature's nebulous identity was a virtue rather than a problem. In the dimensionless space of the TV screen, Whatizit could “morph” into virtually any kind of object or athlete.

Most Atlanta residents were embarrassed by what one local newspaper columnist called the “Olympic maggot.” Many were confused and dismayed by ACOG's choice of symbols. The sentimental favorite had been a highly stylized version of the city's official symbol—the phoenix rising from the ashes. Other contenders that failed to meet the approval of either ACOG or the Atlanta public included “Peter Peachnut,” a weird fusion of Georgia's two main cash crops—peaches and peanuts; “CenTen,” a rather goofy-looking flame; “Friendly the Fawn,” a white-tailed deer in a track suit; and “Fox,” inspired by

Br'er Fox of the *Uncle Remus Tales* compiled by Atlanta native Joel Chandler Harris.

Rather than reconsider its decision, ACOG responded to the ridicule by hiring a top-notch animation studio to do a makeover of Whatizit. Aided by interviews with almost 200 pre-teen focus groups and a write-in campaign conducted through *Parade* magazine, the spin doctors spent a year crafting a more appealing image for the creature. In their hands, Whatizit was transmogrified into “Izzy,” an adventurous teenage Whatizit who lives in a world of Whatizits inside the Olympic torch. According to his new biography, Izzy was on a quest to become the first Whatizit to compete in the Olympic Games.

While most adults were not moved, the makeover did enhance the blue blob's appeal to the Barney the Dinosaur set. At one point, ACOG officials covered the floor of the Georgia Dome with 85,000 fan letters as a testimony to Izzy's newfound celebrity. The turnaround revived ACOG's dream of turning Izzy into a licensed character worth tens of

Continued on page 39

©1996 KIT BOYCE